The Story of the Nations

THE COMING OF PARLIAMENT

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THE STORY OF THE NATIONS

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THE COMING OF PARLIAMENT

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KING HENRY VII. (1457–1509).

From the effigy by Torregiano on the monument in Westminster Abbey.

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THE COMING OF PARLIAMENT

ENGLAND FROM 1350 TO 1660

BY

L. CECIL JANE

EDITOR OF BEDE'S "ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY"

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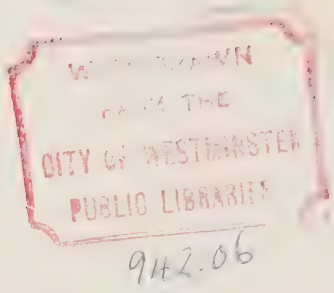

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PREFACE

THE general scheme of this volume is indicated by its title. It deals more especially with the development of the constitution within the three centuries with which it is concerned, and it is an attempt to trace the steps by which Parliament attained to a permanently important share in the government of England. On the other hand, while special stress is laid upon this theme, other sides of the national life have not been ignored. Some allusion to them, indeed, is necessary that the progress of Parliament may be illustrated and understood. I have also included an outline of the general history of the period that the reader's memory may be refreshed as to the principal events.

I wish to thank those who have assisted me with their help and advice. And I owe a special debt of gratitude to the lady who so generously gave her time to the work of compiling the index.

L. CECIL JANE.

OXFORD,
November, 1904.

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ENGLAND

By Rob.t Morden

A Scale of Miles

10 20 30 40 50

10 20 30 40 50

10 20 30 40 50

Sold by Abel Swale Awnsham & John Churchil

PART OF SCOTLAND

THE IRISH SEA

THE ENGLISH OCEAN OR GERMAN OCEAN

ST. GEORGE CHANNEL

BRISTOL CHANNEL

THE ENGLISH CHANNEL

PART OF IRELAND

PART OF FRANCE

PART OF FLANDERS

NORTHUMBERLAND

CUMBERLAND

WESTMORELAND

DURHAM

YORKSHIRE

LANCASHIRE

CHESHIRE

DENBIGHSHIRE

FLINTSHIRE

ANGLESEY

CARNARVANSHIRE

MERIONETHSHIRE

MONTGOMERYSHIRE

SHROPSHIRE

STAFFORDSHIRE

WARWICKSHIRE

WORCESTERSHIRE

RADNORSHIRE

HEREFORDSHIRE

BRECKNOCKSHIRE

CARMARTENSHIRE

PEMBROKESHIRE

CARDIGANSHIRE

GLAMORGAN

MONMOUTHSHIRE

GLOCESTERSHIRE

OXFORDSHIRE

BERKSHIRE

SOMERSETSHIRE

DEVONSHIRE

CORNWALL

HAMPSHIRE

SURREY

SUSSEX

KENT

MIDDLESEX

LONDON

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

HERTFORDSHIRE

ESSEX

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

HUNTINGTONSHIRE

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

LEICESTERSHIRE

RUTLANDSHIRE

LINCOLNSHIRE

NORFOLK

SUFFOLK

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

DERBYSHIRE

I. MAN

Mule of Kintyre

Port Patrick

Bay of Glenluce

Mule of Galloway

Dumfreice

Kirkcudbright

Carrick vergus

Pt. of Ayr

Jerby Pt.

Peel

Douglas

Long Ness

The Calf of Man

St Bees head

Ravenglas

Millum C.

Walney I.

Barwick

Holy Island

The Staples

Cocket I.

Tinmouth haven

Hartlepool

Tees mouth

Flamborough Head

Spurn Head

Salfleet

Patrington

Humber R.

Yarmouth

Lestoffe

Cast Ness

Southwold

Aldborough

Orford

Landguard Fort

Harwich

Gunfleet

Foley

Whitby

Scarborough

Bridlington

Kilham

Hornsey

Beverley

Hull

Headon

Wells

Cromer

Winterton Ness

Burnham

Thames R.

Shelnes

Margat

North Foreland

Sandown C.

Deale C.

Walmer C.

South Foreland

Ostend

Newport

Dunkirk

Calais

Graveling

Boulogne

Brachy Pt.

Dengeness

Rumney

Lid

Hastings

Rye

Winchelsea

Battell

Chichester

Selsey

Portsmouth

Arundel

Shoreham

Cuckfield

Horsham

Farnham

Godalming

Guildford

Windsor

Reading

Oxford

Abingdon

Bristoll

Bath

Wells

Glocester

Worcester

Hereford

Shrewsbury

Chester

Liverpool

Manchester

Leeds

Wakefield

Doncaster

Sheffield

Derby

Nottingham

Leicester

Coventry

Birmingham

Lichfield

Stafford

Newcastle

Northwich

Warrington

Wigan

Bolton

Preston

Lancaster

Kendal

Penrith

Carlisle

Cockermouth

Keswick

Appleby

Brough

Richmond

Darlington

Durham

Sunderland

Newcastle

Morpeth

Alnwick

Berwick

Kelso

Jedburgh

Dumfries

Annan

Chapel of the Cruns

Bamburgh

Holy Head

Hilary Pt.

Ormshead Pt.

Wallasey Pt.

Hilbre I.

Formby H.

Dublin

Dublin Bay

Drogheda

Carnarvan

Bangor

St Asaph

Denbigh

Ruthin

Chirk

Wrexham

Whitchurch

Nantwich

Middlewich

Knutsford

Macclesfield

Congleton

Leek

Newcastle

Stone

Lichfield

Tamworth

Atherstone

Nuneaton

Coventry

Kenilworth

Warwick

Stratford

Evesham

Pershore

Tewkesbury

Gloucester

Cirencester

Malmesbury

Chippenham

Devizes

Marlborough

Newbury

Reading

Windsor

Staines

Kingston

Croydon

Guildford

Godalming

Petersfield

Midhurst

Chichester

Arundel

Horsham

Cuckfield

Lewes

Hastings

Rye

Winchelsea

Battell

Tunbridge

Sevenoke

Dartford

Rochester

Canterbury

Sandwich

Feversham

Faversham

Maidstone

Ashford

Romney

Dover

Deal

Sandown

Walmer

Deal

Ramsgate

Margate

Reculver

Whitstable

Sittingbourne

Milton

Gravesend

Tilbury

Barking

Romford

Brentwood

Chelmsford

Maldon

Colchester

Harwich

Ipswich

Woodbridge

Aldborough

Southwold

Lestoffe

Yarmouth

Norwich

Thetford

Bury

Newmarket

Cambridge

Ely

Wisbech

Peterborough

Stamford

Grantham

Newark

Lincoln

Gainsborough

Retford

Worksop

Mansfield

Chesterfield

Derby

Ashbourne

Uttoxeter

Lichfield

Tamworth

Atherstone

Nuneaton

Coventry

Daventry

Northampton

Towcester

Buckingham

Aylesbury

Wycombe

Henley

Wallingford

Abingdon

Oxford

Woodstock

Chipping Norton

Banbury

Brackley

Towcester

Daventry

Rugby

Lutterworth

Hinckley

Leicester

Melton

Oakham

Uppingham

Stamford

Spalding

Boston

Sleaford

Folkingham

Grantham

Bourne

Holbeach

Wisbech

Lynn

Swaffham

Thetford

Bury

Newmarket

Cambridge

Ely

Huntingdon

St Ives

St Neots

Bedford

Dunstable

Hertford

Ware

Hoddesdon

Waltham

Epping

Romford

Barking

Greenwich

Deptford

Lambeth

Westminster

Kensington

Hammersmith

Brentford

Hounslow

Staines

Egham

Chertsey

Weybridge

Kingston

Epsom

Ewell

Reigate

Godstone

Tunbridge

Sevenoke

Dartford

Gravesend

Tilbury

Barking

Romford

Brentwood

Chelmsford

Maldon

Colchester

Harwich

Ipswich

Woodbridge

Aldborough

Southwold

Lestoffe

Yarmouth

Norwich

THE COMING OF PARLIAMENT

I

INTRODUCTION

WHILE it is an obvious truism to say that all historical periods are marked by change, it is also true that there are essentially transitional epochs; and, in the history of England, such a transitional epoch is found in the three centuries which elapsed between the Black Death and the Restoration. No date, within these limits, can be confidently assigned as the starting-point of a new system, but in 1660 the whole condition of England was quite different from that in 1350. And this gradual evolution of the new, this lack of rapid or revolutionary change, is the essence of transition—a word which implies the slow passing of an old order.

A brief comparison of the kingdom of Edward III. with that of Charles II. is sufficient to indicate the progress which was accomplished in those three hundred years. The first-named sovereign ruled a

semi-continental state, owning lands on both sides of the Channel; he ruled a large part of Southern France, but he did not rule Scotland, which was still the seat of an independent, and, indeed, a hostile, kingdom. The government of England was still largely feudal, though modified by the addition of Parliament, which body was still in its infancy and of which the permanency was but doubtful. And the power of the monarch was still very great; he was still the supreme and unquestioned head of the executive. In addition to these territorial interests, England was bound to the Continent by the stronger tie of religion; her Church was but part of that great Christian body over which the Pope presided. And the chief wealth of the country lay in agriculture; the centres of population lay in the south, and the principal exports were raw materials.

In 1660 all this has been changed. The English possessions on the Continent have been finally lost, and though Charles inherits the title of King of France, the wildest visionaries do not propose to attempt to enforce a claim which has long since become obsolete. The map of Europe has been redrawn, and, while England's rivalry is mainly with the Dutch, the King of France is occupied with a struggle against the house of Austria. On the other hand, Charles rules over Scotland as well as England, and a new Empire is arising across the seas in lands of which the very existence was unknown to Edward III. Feudalism has passed away and the feudal dues, which still legally exist, are on the eve of being finally abolished. The Monarchy, after

many vicissitudes, has apparently emerged triumphant from a struggle with the Parliament, but that triumph is not really complete. The authority of the king is henceforth limited, and there is no longer any question of depriving the representative assembly of a share in the government. England is becoming a manufacturing state, the north is rising in wealth and importance at the expense of the south, and English adventurers have extended their operations over the whole of the known world. Finally, the Church has been severed from the rest of Christendom; it has become national at the expense of its political power and of its universality, and it is now assailed by the growth of Nonconformity, which has but recently threatened its very existence.

Of the many changes here indicated, two stand out with especial prominence: the growth of liberty, and the growth of what may be described as insularity. Between the two movements there is a close connection. Feudalism, as a system, was bound up with the land, and the greatness of the feudal barons lay in their value in time of war. As long as the kings of England were more or less constantly occupied upon the Continent, the Baronage retained its importance, and though the occasional necessities of the Monarchy might compel an appeal to Parliament, yet the royal ministers were selected from the class which supplied the generals of brigade in the expeditions across the Channel. When these expeditions ceased, a blow was struck at Feudalism—a blow which was all the heavier because it was followed by an attack upon the spiritual peers also. The political

power of the Church rested upon its universality, and when the Reformation cut off the English Church from the rest of Christendom, it led naturally to a decline in the temporal greatness of churchmen. Hitherto, they had been a class apart: they possessed their own courts; they were, at least theoretically, subjects of the Vicar of Christ as well as of the King of England; and, by their vow of celibacy, they appeared to be withdrawn from a large part of the ordinary cares and troubles of the world. At the same time, much of the wealth of the clergy passed into lay hands, and this fact further contributed to reduce the power of the Church.

Now with the cessation of wars in France, with the abandonment of schemes for a continental empire, and with the gradual withdrawal of England from the concerns of Europe, attention was turned more and more to commerce. And thus the very causes which depressed the Baronage and the Church contributed to the rise of a middle class, capable of taking the places of the old ministers. In short, the balance of political power was changed, and England, having ceased to be a military state, gradually became truly free. Among the causes which led to the final triumph of liberty, the growth of insularity was not the least important.

The steps which led to the establishment of a Limited Monarchy—limited, that is, not by the rebellious character of a class of great nobles, but by a rational partition of authority between the sovereign and the representatives of the nation—may be summarised. In the reign of Edward III., the first step

was made in the Hundred Years' War, which was nonfeudal in its inception and which compelled the king to conciliate Parliament for the sake of its financial support. At the deposition of Richard II., a second step was made; the Monarchy lost its feudal character when the crown was transmitted to a collateral branch of the dynasty in accordance with a theory unknown to Feudalism. In the subsequent faction-fight of the Wars of the Roses, the Baronage was destroyed; and in the strong Monarchy, inaugurated by Edward IV. and perfected by the Tudors, there was found a safeguard against a recrudescence of feudal anarchy. At the same time, the idea of a continental empire was finally abandoned, a policy of isolation was adopted, and the energies of Englishmen were turned from France to the sea. And the Reformation accomplished in the Church the same work which had been done by other agencies in the State. The peculiar character of the Tudor Monarchy raised a new body in the country which should be capable of resisting the absolutist attempts of the Stuarts; and the Great Rebellion was the final act in the drama. At that time, the middle class, or, more accurately, a party composed of the men whom the Tudors had trained, withstood and overthrew the Monarchy, and, though they failed to make England a republic, they secured her for ever from the danger of an absolutism.

The struggle, which fills this period of some three centuries, may, then, be divided into four general periods. In the first, the Monarchy loses its feudal character. In the second, a constitutional interlude

ends in anarchy and the destruction of the Baronage. In the third, a new opposition rises under the ægis of a strong Monarchy. And in the fourth, this new opposition triumphs over the very power to which it owed its existence, and inaugurates that system of government which prevails, if in a somewhat modified form, in our own time.

II

ENGLAND IN 1350

It is necessary to preface the actual history of this period by relating, very shortly, the events of the years immediately preceding the date at which it begins, and by examining, with greater detail, the causes of that great war upon which England was engaged in 1350. For not only did that struggle occupy the attention of Englishmen, during the greater part of Edward III.'s reign, to the exclusion of other matters, but it had also a very great effect both upon the foreign policy of the country and upon its internal affairs.

Edward had ascended the throne as a result of the intrigues of his mother, Isabella of France, and of her accomplice, Mortimer, who had enjoyed the support of the great barons as opposed to the personal favourites of the late king. The discontent of the same nobles enabled Edward to overthrow the clique to whom he owed his crown, and at the age of nineteen to assume the government in person (1330). His earlier years were occupied by the affairs of Scotland; the recognition of Bruce, by

the Treaty of Northampton had been one of the most unpopular of Mortimer's acts, and Edward was obliged, by the force of circumstances, to attempt to avenge the reverses of his father. He accomplished this—at least, to a certain extent—by the victory of Halidon Hill, but he abandoned the policy of Edward I. in favour of a less attractive, but more effective, course of action. Recognising that it would be futile to attempt the subjugation of a country, whose sons were wedded to independence and which abounded in impregnable fastnesses, he determined to reduce it to such a degree of weakness that it could not injure him, and that he should have a controlling influence in it. The claims of Edward Balliol, the son of that Balliol whom Edward I. had declared king, afforded him an occasion for breaking the recent peace. Professing his desire to restore the rightful Prince, he invaded Scotland with an overwhelming force. Bruce was dead; his successor, David, was a minor; and Balliol was not without several supporters. At the battle of Halidon Hill (1333), the Scots were defeated with great loss, and the English king placed his protégé on the throne. Balliol's reign was short and troubled, but the internal dissensions of Scotland freed England from all danger on the north. At a later date, David fell into Edward's hands, being taken prisoner at Neville's Cross (1346), and he was so well treated that, when he was eventually ransomed, he was little more than Edward's viceroy, having become a strong partisan of England. In this way, Edward accomplished his aims with

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

KING EDWARD III. (1312–1377).

From his monument in Westminster Abbey.

regard to Scotland, and gave, perhaps, the first indication of the policy of controlling, as opposed to conquering, states. Edward I. had attempted to unite Great Britain by force; his grandson, warned by his failure, was content to ensure that he should possess a predominant voice in the affairs of Scotland, while he recognised the nominal independence of that kingdom. And in his care for the substance, and disregard for the name, of power, there is seen a distinct advance towards the theories which prevail at the present day.

The same change of policy is to be marked in the relations of Edward with France. The Hundred Years' War was unlike any previous contest, and was not the outcome of the old and bitter rivalry between the Capetians and the Plantagenets. Hitherto the struggles which had taken place between France and England had been, to a great extent, the outcome of the natural antipathy of near neighbours. Henceforth, they have a much deeper significance; the strife becomes eternal, and, despite occasional interruptions, is never totally extinguished. The causes of this war were fourfold: Edward's personal character, the assistance given by the French to the Scotch, the question of Guienne, and the question of Flanders. And of these causes the first and the second were subsidiary; while of the two remaining, the latter was the more important.[1]

[1] It is to be noted that M. Déprez (*Les Preliminaires de la Guerre de Cent Ans*) holds that the true aim of the war was the retention of Guienne; but it seems that the peculiar character of the struggle was due to the question of Flanders. A defensive war for Guienne was wholly in accord with "feudal" ideas, whereas a war on behalf of the

In the outbreak of war, Edward's personal character had its share. He was naturally of a war-like disposition and anxious for military glory, as well as endowed with a strong belief in his own capacity for generalship. His reign could not have been a peaceful one in any case, and since France afforded ampler scope for him than Scotland, a French war was probable. He was imbued also with the spurious chivalry which characterises the later Middle Ages—with a kind of bastard knight-errantry—and this led him to espouse the cause of Robert of Artois. Robert was a French baron, who having lost his estates and failed in an attempt to regain them by wholesale forgery, fled from justice, took refuge in England, and asked the help of Edward for the recovery of his lands. Such a request appealed to the knight-errant in the English king, and was an additional reason for an attack upon France. The fact that Robert was, in modern phrase, a criminal had no weight. He posed as an injured man and, as Edward was anxious to help some one, he did not inquire too closely into the genuineness of the injuries. As has been said, his attitude was characteristic of the time. Already the days of genuine chivalry were past. There was much talk of devotion to the fair sex, to the weak, and to the oppressed. Of real gallantry and nobility there was little, and such pretexts, as the case of Robert of Artois afforded, were merely used to enable men to satisfy their love of war. Both Edward and his son were

Flemmings was unjustifiable, or inexplicable, according to those same theories.

typical men of the time in which they lived. They had every sympathy for the misfortunes of the great, none for those of the countless poor. The Black Prince could wait upon his captive liege lord and console him for his defeat, but he could also order the wholesale butchery of Limoges. The tears of a woman in distress could move the hearts of the nobles, if she were noble also; the cries of children, murdered in cold blood, fell upon deaf ears. And so Edward made war with a light heart, and alleged as one of his justifications the wrongs of a convicted forger.

During the war with Scotland Edward found that the party of Bruce was receiving help from France. Philip VI. sent both ships and men to the Scotch, and when the young king fled before Balliol, it was to Paris that he went. Here he was well entertained and granted the castle of Château Gaillard, while the French king continued to support the regency and tried by all means in his power to thwart the English plans. Edward complained of this conduct; but he could obtain no satisfaction, and he had, therefore, a just reason for war, on these grounds alone.

But had the only causes of dispute been Edward's own character and the French policy in Scotland, the war would have been far less important and might have degenerated into a petty struggle such as that between Edward I. and Philip the Fair. As a matter of fact, however, there were other and more potent reasons to induce Edward to attack France, and these are to be found in the questions of Guienne

and Flanders. In the South of France, the relics of the inheritance of Henry II. were still in the possession of England—which held the provinces of Guienne and Gascony—parts of the old duchy of Aquitaine. They included the basin of the Garonne and the important towns of Bayonne and Bordeaux. These two places were the seat of a flourishing trade in wine, which was one of the chief sources of English wealth. It was the policy of France, from the time of Philip the Fair and even from an earlier date, to encroach gradually upon the English territories. Charles IV. had filched away several towns—unimportant in themselves, but important from a relative point of view. Philip pursued his predecessor's policy and declined to make restitution when Edward complained. And, since the gradual progress of the French threatened the whole of the English possessions, and thus the existing trade, it is here that the first true cause of war is to be found.

The question of Flanders was still more important, since it was more pressing. There was a constant strife between the Count of Flanders and the great commercial cities, Ghent, Antwerp, and Bruges. The kings of France were the chief support of their vassals, the counts; while, on the other hand, the burgesses relied upon England, being very closely connected with that country by commercial ties. And, as the triumph of the count would have involved the practical annihilation of their wool trade with Flanders, the English kings had rendered consistent support to the popular party. Soon after

the accession of Edward III. Philip had inflicted a crushing defeat upon the revolted Flemmings; but their discontent continued, and they found an able leader in James Van Artevelde, a brewer of Ghent. He appealed to England for aid, and the necessity of saving him from the French—and thus securing the wool trade from interruption—contributed more than anything else to the declaration of war.

As has been said already, the war which thus began was distinctly different from all former wars; and its distinct character is very clearly shown in the claim of Edward to the French crown. This claim was certainly not a cause of war; it was only really put forward after war had begun, and may be regarded rather as an effect, or, at most, as a pretext for aggression. The weakness of the claim is at once obvious. Edward's argument was that, while the Salic Law barred females from the succession, it permitted inheritance through them, and that as heir to Isabella, he was therefore the rightful king. Actually the Salic Law, which he was bound to admit in order to put forward any claim, made no mention of this particular point, and thus gave a silent denial to Edward's theory. But, even if it had expressly stipulated that inheritance through the female line was admissible, the English king was not the nearest heir. Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, was the grandson of Louis X., Isabella's eldest brother, and was, therefore, the representative of the elder branch. Edward was compelled to qualify his position, and to declare that the nearest to the common ancestor, Philip IV., was the true heir.

But this contention sensibly weakened his title, since the contrary position had not only been upheld by Edward I., in the award of Berwick, but also tacitly admitted by Edward III. when he claimed that Edward Balliol was the rightful king of Scotland. Further, the English king had done homage to Philip VI., and expressly recognised him as his liege lord, and at a later date he first deliberately opposed his own views—in the case of the Breton succession—and then abandoned them in the treaty of Bretigni. It is, indeed, quite clear that Edward had no real belief in the justice of his claim, and that it was merely put forward in order to place the struggle upon a more national basis, and to conciliate feudal feeling.[1] In previous wars the English kings had been greatly hampered and hindered from pursuing such advantages as they might gain by the consideration that they were fighting against their feudal superior. Their own barons were reluctant to attack the person of the French king. On more than one occasion the English had allowed all the fruits of victory to be snatched from them by giving way to the dictates of the feudal conscience. Edward resolved to overcome these difficulties by a simple, if novel, device. He claimed the throne of France, and thus changed the whole character of the war. It was no longer a conflict between the vassal king of England and his overlord, but between two rival

[1] The Flemmings requested Edward to assume the title of "King of France," but it may be suggested that this only indicates the fact that they also realised the advantages which would accrue to them from such an act.

claimants to the same dignity. So far from feeling compunction at attacking his liege, Edward constantly referred to his subject, "Sir Philip of Valois," while his partisans could now assert that they were defending their feudal superior against his revolted vassals. In these considerations may be found the first cause which led to the making of the claim. But another circumstance had great weight. To the feudal mind the only reasonable wars were those waged for the recovery or retention of feudal possessions. A war in defence of trade did not appeal to the baronial mind, which disdained such sordid considerations. Edward, on the other hand, was really fighting for his trade, and thus his cause needed strengthening from the feudal standpoint. A few unimportant towns were perhaps at stake, but their recovery would not have been enough for Edward's purpose. He wished to humble France to such a degree as to prevent all possibility of future interruption of English trade, and in order to rouse the enthusiasm of the barons it was necessary to put forward a great ideal. The revival of the question of Normandy, Maine, and Anjou might have answered the purpose, but the claim to the whole of France was a much larger conception and, for the reasons already given, one better calculated to serve his purpose. Moreover, on the Oriental merchant's system of starting from an extravagantly high price and gradually coming down, the very vastness of Edward's claim would enable England to treat from a position of greater advantage. It was for such reasons as these that the claim was brought forward, as a

political expedient and not with any hope of realisation. It gave England a much more advantageous position than she had enjoyed in previous wars; it soothed feudal susceptibilities, and roused feudal ambitions; it made the war a national conflict.

As has been suggested already, the object of all previous struggles between England and France had been the recovery or retention of the Norman and Angevin lands on the Continent. And, to a certain extent, the present war partook of the same character, since one of the questions for settlement was whether England should retain her hold upon Guienne. But in this connection it is of the utmost importance to note that the English possessions in Southern France formed a political and ethnographical unity. Aquitaine—the tract of country south of the Loire and west of the mountains of Auvergne—had never been really united with the rest of France. In early times part of it was included in the Visigothic Septimania, as opposed to Frankish Gaul, and under the Carolingians it was a semi-independent duchy. For a short time it was attached to the French crown by the marriage of Louis VII. with Eleanor, the heiress of the duchy, but it was again lost by the divorce of the queen and her subsequent marriage with Henry of Anjou. In their sympathies, the people of Guienne and Gascony — which formed the larger part of Aquitaine—were more nearly akin to Spain than to France. There was, then, a marked contrast between a war for the retention of these provinces and one for the recovery of Normandy or Maine. The northern possessions of Henry II. were really part of France.

The inhabitants were thoroughly French in character, sympathy, and language. But the Gascons were a race apart, they, as a whole, were bitterly opposed to French rule, and they were never really amalgamated with the other subjects of the French crown until centuries after the time of the Hundred Years' War. In the fourteenth century they were willing subjects of the English, and not merely so because the union with England gave them greater freedom in their trade. At a later period we find them the mainstays of Protestantism, regarded with contempt by the polished Parisians, slow, uncouth, non-French; the butt for the jests and gibes of courtiers and authors. A war to retain possession of lands inhabited by such a race was very different from a war for the retention of Normandy. The one was an attempt to enable a large number of people to follow their own inclinations, the other to divide by force of arms territories which were essentially one. In Guienne the English rule was popular; in Normandy it was hated. And so the war of Edward III. in the south was very different from the expeditions of former kings in the north. To a certain extent its objects were anticipated by Edward I., who fought merely to secure Guienne, but that king was essentially a lawyer, and his whole policy was modified by his strict observance of feudal rights, so that the parallel is incomplete.

Both Henry II. and Edward I. had attempted to further their schemes in France by the formation of European coalitions, though neither had been successful. John had sought help from Germany,

NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD.

From a seventeenth-century print.

and had identified himself with the excommunicated Otto IV., and the Emperor had fought for him at Bouvines. Edward III. made another attempt to gain allies, taking as his basis the Northern League of John. He tried to combine together the various interests opposed to France in the north-west; and, as far as paper alliances went, he was quite successful. Flanders, as has been already seen, was largely in his favour, since the war was undertaken principally on behalf of the revolted cities; and the English king spared no pains to consolidate this alliance by flattering the pride of Artevelde. In the modern Belgium he was connected by marriage with the Count of Hainault, and the Low Countries were thus practically united on his behalf. He further attempted to attach to himself the small independent principalities lying on the eastern frontier of Flanders in the basin of the Rhine. Brabant, Cologne, Juliers, and Guelders entered into alliance with him, and soon afterwards Edward obtained an office, which apparently gave him some right to demand the services of the states of Western Germany. The Emperor, Lewis IV. of Bavaria, was involved in a struggle against a rival claimant, Frederic of Austria, and the latter received the support of the Papacy. But at this time the "Babylonish Captivity" had reduced the Pope to the position of a dependent of the French crown, and his policy was dictated to him by the Court of Paris. Edward, therefore, had little difficulty in inducing Lewis to make common cause with him against Philip VI. He received the title of "Imperial Vicar," which seemed to give him

authority in the Empire. As a matter of fact, the alliance did little good. The Emperor was completely occupied with his own troubles; the minor princes were indifferent; and the Flemmings were anxious only to secure local freedom. Yet Edward's League has a peculiar importance. If, as seems clear, the real object of the war was the humiliation of France, the alliance may be regarded as the prototype of the great coalitions of the eighteenth century, as the first European combination formed with the object of checking the progress and ambition of the kings of France.

Two more points in connection with the character of the French war remain to be considered; and they are important because they helped indirectly to increase the power of Parliament. Before the time of Edward III. the main strength of all armies lay in the heavy cavalry, the feudal horsemen. In the Scotch wars of Edward I. the value of archers had been proved at Falkirk, and the Genoese had acquired a great reputation for their skill with the crossbow; still, on the whole, infantry were regarded as being of only secondary importance. But in the Hundred Years' War a most important change was effected. The great victories of Creçy and Poitiers were gained by archers; and they proved beyond question that the value of foot soldiers had been underestimated. Now, the archers were the plebeian part of the mediæval army. They were drawn from the class which did not own land, or at least did not own large estates. The feudal barons despised service on foot, and were unfitted for it. As a

natural result, anything which tended to minimise the importance of cavalry was a blow to feudalism, and the rise of the archers contributed indirectly to that of the Commons. For the strength of the Baronage and their predominant influence on the government depended upon their value in time of war. As long as their help was essential to successful war, they were important in time of peace. They must be conciliated at all costs. As soon as this ceased to be the case their greatness was over. The Hundred Years' War marks the beginning of the decline of feudalism in England -the first step in the transference of power to the Commons. For up to this time the barons ruled, though the Commons might advise, but henceforth the government gradually became vested more and more in the middle class.

At the same time, the growth of the navy contributed to a similar result. Up to this period the periodical invasions of France had been purely military undertakings. The question of communications and of the command of the sea had not arisen. The French navy, which, at earliest can only be dated from the acquisition of Normandy, was as yet practically non-existent. Such naval operations as there were resulted rather from the rivalry between the Norman fishermen and the sailors of the Cinque Ports than from the policy of the rival government. But about the time of the accession of Philip VI. more attention began to be directed to naval matters. A large fleet was raised, partly from the ports of Normandy, but mainly from the Genoese, and the command of the

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

TRAVELLING BY SEA IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

From the MS. Harl. 1319.

Channel was disputed. As a result the English Government made strenuous efforts to increase the efficiency of the navy, and more interest was displayed in maritime affairs than hitherto. And accordingly the lower class rose in importance still more, since they supplied the sailors as well as the infantry, and there was a corresponding decline in the influence of the Baronage, who were useless so far as the sea was concerned.

Enough has now been said to show that there was a great difference between the Hundred Years' War and all previous contests between England and France. To sum up these points of contrast, it was waged with a new object, and it was fought under new political and military conditions. Hitherto the personal ambitions of rulers had been at least a very potent, if not the sole, factor in every war, whereas the present struggle was essentially popular. The more minute consideration of the effects of the war upon England may be postponed for the present, but it may be asserted in this place that, generally speaking, the war marks a distinct advance towards modern conditions in policy, in government, and in the social condition of the people. For this advance the struggle between England and France was responsible, directly or indirectly, and in this fact lies its ultimate importance.

In conclusion, it remains to sketch very briefly the progress of events from the outbreak of war to the time at which this period properly begins. The first campaigns were abortive. Edward, as might have been expected, landed in Flanders and secured the

temporary freedom of the cities, but more than this he could not do. Philip studiously avoided a decisive battle, and contented himself with intriguing among the German allies of England. Despite his office as Imperial Vicar, Edward found himself without any great support. The Flemmings were desirous only of protection against their count, and the neighbouring princelings were easily won over by France. As a result, the military operations came to nothing, and the only important battle was the naval engagement of Sluys (1340). There Edward caught the French fleet, which had been collected to cut the communications between England and Flanders, at anchor and so badly placed that its superiority in numbers was valueless. The battle which ensued resulted in the practical annihilation of the French navy. But even this success had little result, and, hampered by lack of adequate supplies and by the disaffection of his allies, Edward was glad, before the end of the same year, to conclude a truce. This armistice lasted for nearly two years, and was marked by the collapse of Edward's coalition. Philip had already won over the small German states, and now the Emperor himself deserted England, in the hope of gaining the good offices of the French king in his quarrel with the Pope. Artevelde continued to maintain his friendship with the English ; but all the other allies made peace.

The truce was eventually ended by a dispute concerning the succession to the duchy of Brittany. On the death of Duke John III., his brother, the Earl of Montfort, and Charles of Blois, the husband of his

niece, claimed the succession (1342). The French peers supported the latter, and Montfort did homage to Edward. Civil war followed, and the French and English came into conflict. No decisive result was reached, however, and another truce was soon afterwards concluded. At the same time the Pope offered to arbitrate. Both parties agreed to allow him to do so; but the fact of his residence at Avignon placed him too much under French control, and the attempt naturally failed. War broke out again, but the scene of operations was changed. Just before the renewal of hostilities Artevelde was assassinated, and, being thus deprived of his chief supporter in Flanders, Edward determined to attack France in another quarter. An army was despatched to Guienne, and there the Earl of Derby defeated the French at Auberoche. He failed, however, to profit by his victory, and was soon afterwards blockaded at Aiguillon (1345). For his relief Edward collected a large army, and landed at La Hogue in Normandy with the object of drawing off the French from the south by means of a counter attack. He advanced in an easterly direction towards Paris, but found that, though he had gained his immediate object, he was in danger of being surrounded. He therefore turned northwards to join the Flemmings, and had reached Creçy before Philip, who had pursued him in hot haste, came up. Edward, thus brought to bay, selected his own position and fought on the defensive. The impetuosity of the French nobles and the skill of the English archers resulted in the total destruction of Philip's army (1346). Edward, saved from

apparently certain destruction, continued his northward march, and laid siege to Calais. The fall of that town was the only actual fruit of the great victory, but this gave England a valuable base for future operations against Northern France. Another truce followed—the result of the complete exhaustion of both parties—and it was prolonged owing to the ravages of the Black Death. That terrible plague appeared in France soon after the battle of Crecy, and before long extended to England. The medical skill of the time was powerless to cope with it. Thousands of persons died, and it was asserted, though this may be an exaggeration, that half of the total population of England perished. In any case, the fabric of society was shaken to its very foundations. Famine, the result of the scarcity of labour, followed in the wake of the plague. The labouring classes were in a state of incipient revolt. And, as a result, all military operations were suspended. The year 1350 found England at peace, but labouring under a greater calamity than the most calamitous war.

III

THE FALL OF THE FEUDAL MONARCHY

(1350–1399)

THE truce, which had been concluded soon after the fall of Calais and prolonged owing to the ravages of the Black Death, continued in force for about seven years. Both countries were too much occupied with internal troubles to be anxious to renew the war. In England the labouring classes were seething with discontent, while in France the peasantry were in a condition of appalling distress, and the calamities attendant upon unsuccessful war were increased by the prevailing famine. Utterly exhausted, the two nations made several abortive attempts to conclude a permanent peace. Edward reduced his demands to the cession of Aquitaine in full sovereignty, but John, who had succeeded Philip VI. (1350), steadily refused to alienate any French territory, and consequently the negotiations came to nothing. The English began to prepare for war, and just at the same time their prospects of success were increased by the rash conduct of the King of France. Charles

the Bad, of Navarre, who had been a veritable thorn in the side of Philip VI., was arrested and imprisoned, and his followers threw themselves into the arms of England. Encouraged by this accession of strength, Edward made a great effort. In addition to reinforcing the Montfort party in Brittany, he placed two armies in the field. In person he began to advance from Calais towards Paris, but he was recalled by the news that the Scotch had taken Berwick, and were ravaging the northern counties. On the other hand, the Black Prince, starting from Guienne, traversed Southern France to Carcassonne and Narbonne. Hitherto the fertile lands of Languedoc had escaped attack, but now they were wasted with fire and sword. The English army, which was largely composed of mercenaries, was almost mutinous for want of pay, and was given full leave to pillage in all directions. There was no force in the district capable of offering any opposition. The Black Prince returned to Bordeaux, laden with spoil and the curses of the unhappy inhabitants (1355). The wanton cruelty of his proceedings left a lasting impression, all the more vivid because war had been unknown in that country for many years, and the desire for revenge which his ravages inspired had no small share in causing the ultimate national uprising against the English invaders.

At the same time and in the same way Edward himself ravaged Southern Scotland. The Scotch had allied with France, and had invaded England at the moment of the campaign of Creçy. The battle of Neville's Cross, where King David was taken prisoner

and his chief nobles either killed or captured, had resulted, and, for a while, a precarious peace had been maintained between the two countries. But, with the absence of both the English king and his son in France, an opportunity for revenge seemed to have come. The rapid return of Edward compelled the Scotch to abandon Berwick and retreat, but they were pursued by the English army, and the name of "the Burnt Candlemas" testifies to the character of Edward's last expedition into Scotland. He took, indeed, signal vengeance. His army swept over the Lowlands, destroying every living thing and burning crops and houses. But the very completeness of the destruction compelled the invaders to retreat, and, assailed by light troops and oppressed by famine, the English army lost heavily. Shortly afterwards (1356) David was replaced on the Scottish throne, and peace was established, but the memory of "the Burnt Candlemas" lingered, and served to increase the already existing antipathy between the two peoples.

The success of his raid in Southern France encouraged the Black Prince to attempt a repetition of his exploit in the following year, but this time he entered the central districts and marched directly upon Paris. After reaching the neighbourhood of Blois he found that his further progress was barred, and learned that John was approaching with an overwhelming force to cut off his retreat. He began, therefore, to retrace his steps, but, failing to realise his danger to the full, delayed his march by besieging a castle and was overtaken near Poitiers (1356).

The French king foolishly wasted some precious time in fruitless negotiation, and the Black Prince had almost succeeded in making his escape when John ordered the attack. The English were favoured by their position, since trees concealed their operations, and by the attempt of the French king to turn the lessons of previous battles to account, which led him to dismount his vanguard. These dismounted knights, cumbered by their heavy armour, could not move with sufficient rapidity ; they were harassed by the English archers and repulsed, and in their retreat somewhat disordered the cavalry of the second division. That division shared the fate of the first ; a final effort on the part of the reserves, led by the king in person, to retrieve the battle was ineffectual, and by nightfall the Black Prince had gained a complete and surprising victory. John himself was taken prisoner, and many of the chief nobles of France either shared the fate of their master or were left dead on the field. But, despite this great success, the English were unable to follow up their victory. They retreated to Bordeaux, whence the prince and the captive king sailed to England. A truce was soon afterwards concluded, and for a time active operations were suspended.

The condition of France at this time warrants the assumption that had the English actively pressed on the war, the conquest of the country might have been completed. Both countries had taken large bodies of men into their pay for the war, and when the truce was concluded these soldiers found their employment gone. Accordingly, they formed themselves into

bands known as "Free Companies," and spread over France in search of booty. The misery thus caused was increased by the revolt of Paris, which became the scene of the most terrible atrocities, and by the escape of Charles the Bad, who put himself at the head of the mob of the capital and levied war against the Government. To crown all, the peasants broke out into a revolt, known as the Jacquerie, which spread over Northern and Western France. The nobles appeared to have been paralysed with fear. In any case, there was no resistance for a while, and the rebels massacred all who did not join them, sparing neither age nor sex, and filling the country with scenes which cannot be described. But the comparative inaction of the English gave France time to recover, at least to a certain extent. Charles the Dauphin, who acted as Regent, slowly began to make some headway. He recovered Paris and put the ringleaders of the mob to death, while he patched up a peace with the King of Navarre. Soon afterwards the Jacquerie were crushingly defeated at Meaux (1358) and the nobles, combining against them, began to exterminate the remnants. By the time that the war with England was renewed, France was largely a desert, but it had a desert's peace.

The suspension of vigorous hostilities on the part of England may be accounted for by the hope which Edward entertained of being able to obtain his objects by diplomacy. He so far succeeded as to induce the captive John to sign a treaty by which practically all the old inheritance of Henry II. was ceded in full sovereignty to the English king. But

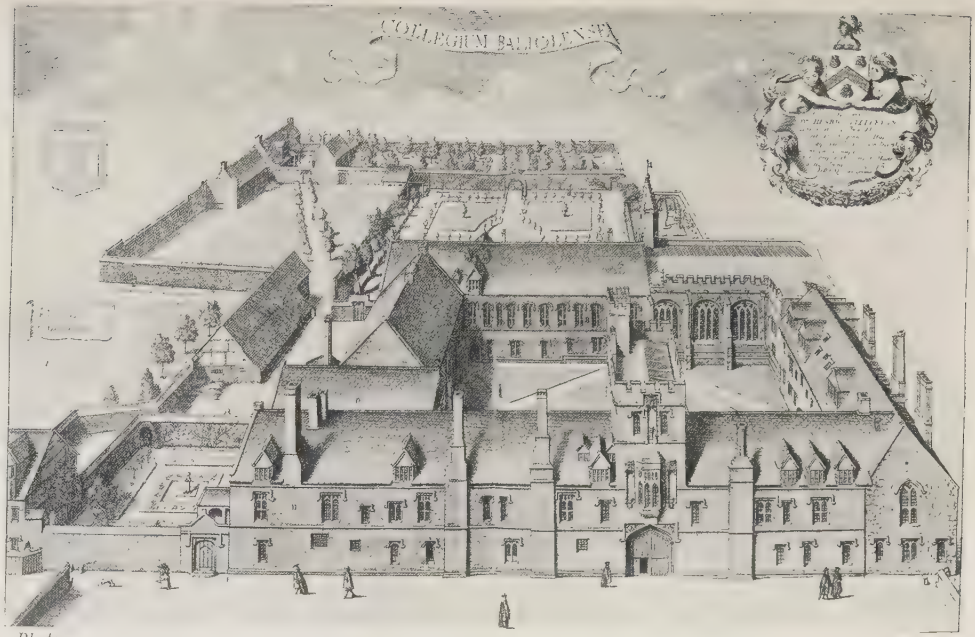


Photo. [*Emery Walker.*

BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

From a seventeenth-century print.

the Dauphin indignantly rejected terms which involved the practical subjection of France, and the States General eagerly upheld him. Accordingly, negotiations were broken off, and Edward landed in Normandy with by far the most formidable army he had ever put into the field. He marched across France into Burgundy, from which he drew a heavy ransom, and he defied the Dauphin from before the walls of Paris. But Charles would not allow his generals to fight, the country afforded no support to the invaders, and the English, threatened with the exhaustion of their supplies and harassed by small bodies of French, began to retire on Aquitaine. Near Chartres the army was overtaken by a severe thunderstorm. The desolation of the country and the sight of men and horses struck by lightning filled Edward with superstitious terror. In the storm he seemed to see the anger of the Deity directed against him, and, suddenly abandoning his schemes of conquest, he opened negotiations with Charles. A peace was soon concluded, which, while involving great sacrifices, was necessary to France and far less humiliating than the treaty which John had signed. By the peace of Bretigni all Aquitaine, including Poitou, together with Calais and Ponthieu, was ceded to Edward in full sovereignty, free of all feudal obligations. In return the English king definitely abandoned his claim to the French throne and to Normandy, Maine, and Anjou, though he still continued to couple France with England in his royal title. John was to be ransomed for three million crowns, to be paid in six annual instalments, and

was to be released on the payment of the first, hostages being given in exchange (1360).

By this treaty Edward had secured, apparently, the objects for which he went to war. France was weakened to the last degree, deprived of all legal right to encroach upon the English lands, and rendered incapable of either effectively renewing the struggle or of interfering with the commercial interests of England. But, actually, the peace was soon interrupted, and assisted by a series of fortunate accidents and by the unwise measures of the English, Charles V. before long restored his country to prosperity, and neutralised all Edward's success. The historical importance of the treaty of Bretigni lay not in the actual terms of peace, but in the new principles which it involved and the blow which it dealt to the feudal theory. Hitherto, whatever might have been the actual effects of an agreement between two states, the legal result had been simply, so far as cessions of land were concerned, the granting of a new fief. For example, when Charles the Simple handed over Normandy to Rolf, the feudal lawyer regarded the transaction, which in effect created an independent state, as the acquisition of a new vassal by the Carolingian monarch. Rolf and his successors recognised Charles and his successors as their overlords, and though Henry II. was a far more powerful sovereign than Louis VII., yet he never for a moment attempted to deny to the French king the respect due to a feudal superior. But in the present case an entirely new idea was found. John alienated a large tract of country and with it

abandoned distinctly all those rights over it, which in feudal law belonged to the grantor. Edward was recognised as having, in feudal terms, no overlord save God, in respect of his lands in France. And this new type of grant being contrary to all feudal law struck a heavy blow at the whole existing system of land tenure. It was a legal revolution and in this fact lies its importance. Henceforward, conquest is no longer a synonym, legally speaking, for the granting of a new fief. It involves an abdication of feudal rights and becomes conquest in the modern sense. Moreover, the treaty of Bretigni marks an advance in political theory. Edward I. would have been incapable of conceiving such an agreement; but his grandson was less imbued with feudal ideas and showed a proper appreciation of the insecurity of his transmarine possessions, when another and hostile king had constant opportunities for interference and when he was responsible to that king for his administration. Ignorantly, perhaps, but none the less surely, Edward III. helped, in no small degree, to revolutionise the character of monarchy, by dealing such a vigorous blow to the accepted system.

As a permanent peace the treaty of Bretigni failed. The rivalry between the two countries was not extinguished, and in Brittany, which had not been included in the general pacification, the forces of the two kingdoms came into contact. The measures taken by Charles V., who became king of France four years after the peace, to restore order in his country led to the renewal of war. The Free

Companies had increased, rather than suspended, their depredations after the end of the active operations, and the first necessity of France was to be delivered from this scourge. The affairs of Castile afforded the desired opportunity. Peter the Cruel had irritated his subjects by his tyranny beyond endurance; his bastard brother, Henry of Trastamara, raised the standard of revolt; and when Peter caused his wife, a French princess, to be put to death, Charles V. threw his whole weight on the side of the rebels. The mercenary bands were enlisted for service in Spain under Du Guesclin, a general of no slight ability. Peter was driven from Castile, and the French king enjoyed the double advantage of having freed his kingdom from one source of weakness and of having established a useful ally on the throne of a neighbouring state.

But the deposed monarch proceeded to Bordeaux, where the Black Prince resided as Viceroy of Aquitaine. Here he played upon the chivalrous ideas of the prince and, by promising moreover to defray liberally all the expenses of the expedition, induced him to assist in the overthrow of Henry of Trastamara. The English army entered Spain and gained a decisive victory at Navarette (1367). Du Guesclin was taken prisoner, the usurper fled to Avignon, and Peter was again seated upon the throne of Castile. But when the Black Prince pressed for the stipulated payment, he was met with excuses and finally a refusal. His army returned to Bordeaux in a state of almost open mutiny, while their leader's health was irretrievably shattered by the effects of the

Spanish climate. Indeed, from first to last, the expedition was a political error and one attended with disastrous results. The position of the English in Aquitaine was by no means strong. Though Guienne was in favour of a close connection with England, Poitou was heart and soul in the French interest, and its inhabitants had zealously opposed the cession of the province. "Our allegiance still belongs to France," was the declaration of the people of Rochelle, when they found that they could not prevent the fulfilment of the Treaty of Bretigni. Even in the south there was anti-English feeling, the result of the viceroyalty of the Black Prince, which was irksome to the people, who had hoped to be practically independent. And the financial difficulties which arose from the Spanish war presently united all in opposition to the English rule. Disappointed of the promised subsidy from Peter, and without other means, the Black Prince was obliged to resort to heavy taxation, and thus naturally alienated the few supporters he had. At the same time he instructed many of his mercenaries, who had openly revolted, to ravage the territories of France, and when they did so, though Aquitaine was relieved to a certain extent, the patriotism of the French was roused, and it was resolved to make a supreme effort to expel the English. Charles V. saw that his opportunity had come. Edward III. was prematurely old, his son was slowly dying, and the French subjects of England were ripe for revolt. When the leading nobles of Aquitaine took the irrevocable step of applying to Paris for re-

dress Charles received them cordially, and, after some hesitation, in flagrant violation of the Treaty of Bretigni, cited the Black Prince to appear before the Royal Court as a vassal, under pain of forfeiture. The natural refusal of the viceroy to do so was the signal for the renewal of war (1369).

The policy of France was now conducted on much more rational lines. Charles was a statesman and not a warrior; he despised that thirst for military glory which had been so fatal to Philip and John, and he forbade his generals to fight any pitched battles. In place of this, the French availed themselves of the friendly feelings of the people. Poitou was quickly recovered, and Brittany, where the English party had triumphed, changed sides and expelled Montfort. In vain did the English make raids into France, unable to force a battle and harried throughout their marches, they suffered severely but accomplished nothing useful, and their cause everywhere declined. At last the important city of Limoges opened its gates to the French, and the Black Prince, who had hitherto unwillingly remained a passive spectator of the disasters of his country, arose from his bed of sickness and made one last effort to save the fruits of his earlier victories. Borne on a litter at the head of his army, he reached Limoges, and took that city by storm (1370). But its capture was disastrous to England and disgraceful to the Black Prince. Irritated by the wholesale treachery around him and by his own sickness, he ordered the total massacre of the citizens, and his last victory was stained with the blood of helpless women and

children. The atrocity brought its own punishment. The revolted cities were strengthened in their resistance by the fear of a like fate, the other places in the provinces were roused to rebellion, and the effort which he had made exhausted the remainder of the Black Prince's strength. Shortly after the fall of Limoges, he returned to England to die. His successors lacked his ability and prestige, and the French proved uniformly successful. A Spanish squadron appeared in the Channel, as the ally of France, and off Rochelle gained a decisive victory (1372). The English fleet was practically annihilated, and for some time the command of the Channel was lost. The immediate effect of this defeat was to interrupt to a great extent the communications between England and Guienne and to hasten the loss of that province. It was in vain that a large army under John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, was despatched to France. Landing at Calais, the Duke marched through the heart of the country, but the French avoided a pitched battle and contented themselves with cutting off all stragglers. Lancaster reached Bordeaux with the loss of nearly half his men, having done nothing to hinder the loss of Aquitaine. The attempt was not repeated, and within two years of the battle of Rochelle the triumph of Charles was complete, Bordeaux, Bayonne, Calais, and a few places of small importance alone remained to the English, of all the territory which they had acquired by the Treaty of Bretigni.

There can be no doubt that the progress of the

WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM (1324–1404).

From a portrait by J. Faber, in the Hall of New College, Oxford.

(By kind permission of the Warden.)

French was accelerated by the internal condition of England. Premature old age prevented Edward III. from taking any very active share in the government, and the possession of power was disputed between two parties, headed by William of Wykeham and the Duke of Lancaster respectively. The former lost his authority as a result of the ill-success of the English arms in France (1371), and John of Gaunt assumed the practical government of the country, until the return of the Black Prince gave his opponents a new leader. The Good Parliament (1376) assembled under the auspices of the victor of Poitiers, the Lancastrian ministers were impeached and punished, and, though the Black Prince died before its work was completed, the same House of Commons was able to strike another blow at John of Gaunt's position by securing the formal recognition of the young Richard as heir to the throne. The Parliament, however, was unable to secure its work; a packed House of Commons restored Lancaster to power (1377), and the condemnation of his adherents was annulled or ignored. John of Gaunt was in a position of unrivalled superiority, when his rash and arrogant conduct in the matter of Wycliff, and his unwise attack upon the liberties of London, roused fresh indignation against him. From the ensuing riot he barely escaped with his life, and in the last months of his father's reign he was compelled to adopt a conciliatory attitude.

Richard II. succeeded his grandfather without opposition, but as he was only eight years old a regency was necessary. It was very soon found

to be impossible to exclude Lancaster, as had been intended, from the Council, and when he had been admitted his wealth and influence made him regent in all but name. He was met by almost insuperable difficulties. The French war dragged on, but it was England which now stood on the defensive. The Channel was dominated by a combined Franco-Spanish fleet, the Isle of Wight was invaded, the south coast was ravaged, and it was perhaps only the injudicious conduct of Charles V. in Brittany that saved England from invasion. But even this apparent piece of good fortune led to fresh troubles. The Bretons applied for help, and to supply it fresh taxation was necessary. A poll-tax was imposed, which, though graduated, spared no one, and which the very poor were totally unable to pay (1380). Already there was discontent and distress in the country, and this new burden seems to have been the finishing touch. The peasants rose in fierce revolt throughout the south and east of England (1381). For a while the government seemed to be helpless, and was, perhaps, principally owing to the lack of an adequate leader that the rebellion was ended. The famous, but indefinite, promise of the young king obtained the dispersal of the most threatening band, and as soon as the peasantry had returned to their homes Parliament eagerly seconded the nobles in their work of vengeance.

The Peasants' Revolt proved to be the death-blow to the power of Lancaster. Though treated with marked consideration by the government, he seems to have realised that his unpopularity was too great

for him to face, while he was accused of aiming at the crown and of having caused the failure of the warlike Bishop of Norwich's expedition to Flanders. Richard showed his growing distrust by naming the Earl of March as heir to the throne, and the duke thought it prudent to depart to Spain, where he engaged in a war to establish his wife's claim to the crown of Castile. He was succeeded in his influence in England by his younger brother, Thomas of Gloucester, who secured the support of the Commons (1385). Richard had raised personal friends of low birth to high offices of state, the chief of them being De Vere, whom he made Duke of Ireland, and Michael de la Pole, whom he created Earl of Suffolk and to whom he gave the Chancellorship. Gloucester headed the opposition to these men. At his instigation, Suffolk was impeached and imprisoned, and a commission of reform was instituted (1386). Richard, having obtained a favourable opinion from the judges, began to scheme for the overthrow of Gloucester, but the duke was warned and organised a defence. He was joined by four great lords, the Earl of Derby (afterwards Henry IV.), the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Nottingham, and Lord Arundel. De Vere failed to oppose them successfully and fled, Richard gave way, and the triumph of the "Lords Appellant," as they were termed, was completed (1387). The Parliament which followed, the "Merciless" or "Wonderful" Parliament, was wholly in Gloucester's interest. All the royal ministers were found guilty of high treason, De Vere and Suffolk went into

exile, and the duke established his supremacy (1388).

But at the end of a year, which was marked only by the conclusion of truces with France and Scotland, Richard effected a *coup d'état*, declaring himself to be of age and assuming the government in person. But he showed marked moderation; the personnel of the council was hardly changed, even Gloucester apparently retaining his seat, the "Lords Appellant" remained unpunished, and a conciliatory policy was pursued. For seven years England enjoyed excellent government. Some useful legislation was carried out, Ireland was pacified by a visit from the king and its government to some extent regulated, and the prestige of England abroad was restored by the recovery of Guienne, which revolted to the English after the death of Charles V. Lancaster returned home but made no attempt to secure the government, and Richard's position seemed to be permanently secured. On the death of his first wife he married Isabella, daughter of Charles VI., and concluded a twenty-five years' truce with France, so that both at home and abroad there was peace. But during all this time the king was preparing to take a signal revenge upon his old opponents. Just after his marriage he suddenly arrested Gloucester, Archbishop Arundel, and Warwick, the intrigues of the duke affording some sort of pretext. Parliament declared the former council of regency to have been guilty of high treason; Gloucester died, probably a violent death, in his prison at Calais; Arundel and Warwick

were banished (1397). Two of the "Appellants," Derby and Nottingham, escaped, having joined the royal party, and were rewarded by being made Dukes of Hereford and Norfolk respectively. The Acts of the "Wonderful Parliament" were repealed, and Richard, meeting with no resistance and supported by a subservient Parliament, ruled as an absolute monarch. When shortly afterwards Hereford and Norfolk accused each other of treason, Richard took the opportunity to complete the destruction of his enemies, and, acting on some unknown principle, banished both (1398). The removal of two such powerful subjects may have been wise, but the king committed a serious blunder when, on the death of Lancaster, he seized his lands. Hereford, availing himself of the absence of Richard in Ireland, landed in Yorkshire and was joined by the northern lords. The people had been irritated already by the oppression of the government; the moderation of Hereford, who proclaimed that he desired only to recover his inheritance, won them over, and the king, finding that he had no support, surrendered. A Parliament adjudged him to have forfeited his crown, Richard signed an act of abdication, and the new Duke of Lancaster was recognised as his successor by the unanimous voice of both Houses (1399).

The character of Richard II. presents one of the most curious enigmas in history. It is a mass of apparent contradictions. For seven years he appears as a constitutional monarch, but then he suddenly changes into an unbridled despot. More-

over, he displayed a control of his real feelings which was nothing less than marvellous, a capacity for dissimulation worthy of a modern diplomatist, and, while at one time he was apparently the tool of favourites, at another he showed a marked capacity for government. It seems almost certain that his mind was unbalanced, but the theory that he was really mad is contradicted by his ability. Whatever may be the true explanation, he affords at least an interesting study for the student of psychology.

When the general history of internal affairs during the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II. is considered, three points at once attract special attention—the increased importance of Parliament, the decline of the Baronage, and what may be described as the social unrest, evidenced by the Wycliffite movement and the rising of the Peasants. In the case of Parliament the changes were very great and of the last importance. In its original state that institution was experimental; it was founded by Edward I., and it is very doubtful if that monarch ever realised that he had given to England a new institution of very great value. It was due to that financial distress, which constantly pursued him, that Edward called together the first true assembly of the estates of the realm, and its permanency may be justly attributed in great measure to its success as a medium of taxation. During the rest of the reign of its founder, Parliament was not regularly summoned, and, more than once, recourse was had to the older councils or to other new assemblies. Even the opponents of unrestricted

prerogative, were not united in their ideas as to the best way in which to attain their objects. There was a constant strife between two principles: on the one hand there was the scheme for a baronial council of government, on the other that of a representative assembly of the whole nation. In 1292 the latter principle was carried into effect in the "Model" Parliament, but nineteen years later the measures of the "Lords Ordainers" showed the vitality of the earlier ideas of De Montfort. It was only in the reign of Edward III. that the permanency of Parliament was assured, but during this period the fact was established, and the regular summons of the estates ceased to be a royal expedient and became a popular right. Before the deposition of Richard II., the right of Parliament to a share in the government had been admitted.

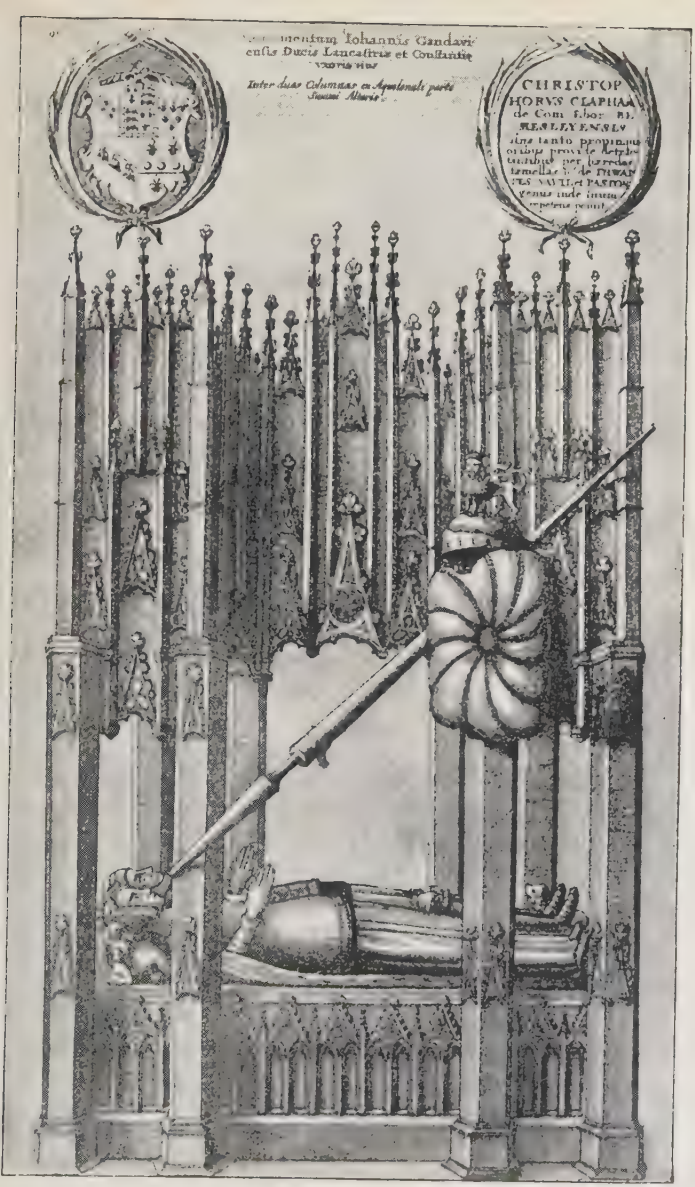
According to the original scheme of Edward I., all the three estates were to be represented and no division into houses was contemplated, but causes, which are unfortunately very obscure, led to a modification of the original plan. The clergy, always jealous of their independence, drew apart and successfully asserted their right to tax themselves in Convocation. As the chief work of the early Parliaments was to make grants of money, this soon led to the entire absence of the proctors of the inferior clergy from the assembly of estates, and, although the bishops and mitred abbots sat with the temporal peers, the perfect representation of Edward I.'s reign ceased to be. In acting thus, the Church aimed at obtaining a greater freedom, but the eventual result

was a decline in her political influence. It affords an interesting example of the general failure to realise the importance of the new body. There were two bodies left in Parliament, distinguished by the form of summons. The greater barons, lay and spiritual, were summoned *nominatim*, that is, individually; the others were summoned *generaliter*, by a writ addressed to the sheriff of each county. In the second class were included the lesser barons, the knights of the shire and the burgesses. But in the early Parliaments there was much division between those summoned *generaliter*. The interests of the component parts were distinct; the class sympathy of the lesser tenants-in-chief drew them towards the peers, and the support given by the towns to the royal power alienated the knights of the shire. How it came to pass that these divisions were healed is not certainly known, but the probability is that the exclusiveness of the *majores barones* repelled the advances of the lesser barons and drove them into the arms of the burgesses, with whom the knights had coalesced already.[1] The only certain fact, however, is that early in the reign of Edward III. the amalgamation of all those summoned through the sheriffs was an accomplished fact. At the same time, the two orders began to sit and to deliberate apart, or in other words the two houses of Lords and Commons were founded. Such a separation had never been contemplated by Edward I., but it resulted in a great accession of strength. Disputes between the orders

[1] The lesser barons had ceased to sit in their own right, the summons to Parliament being gradually confined more and more to the great men.

would have been the source of frequent parliamentary deadlocks had there been no division, but, being separated, they were able to work in harmony, and actually there are few instances of a conflict between the houses during the whole course of English history. This severance was the first advance made in the reign of Edward III.

As it was primarily for financial reasons that Parliament had been called into being, so it was naturally in the control of the national purse that its authority was first asserted. The French war contributed in many ways to the growth of the power of the representative assembly at the expense of the royal council, which acted as a ministry, and which had hitherto controlled the executive, and, to a great extent, the legislature also. Edward was in constant need of money, and, although he was perpetually resorting to illegal methods of raising taxes, he could not afford to quarrel with Parliament. Early in his reign, when he attempted to exclude the bishops from the House of Lords owing to his quarrel with Stratford, he bowed to the will of the two houses (1341), and in every case afterwards he ultimately gave way. As a result, the Commons established, more or less securely, their right to impose all taxation; to control in some measure the administration, especially the disposal of the taxes granted; and to give assent to all legislation, though the absence of such assent did not as yet necessarily invalidate the acts of the council. The chief conflict of Edward's reign raged, as was natural, round the question of the imposition of taxes. The Commons on five distinct



MONUMENT OF JOHN, DUKE OF LANCASTER (1340–1399), AND OF HIS WIFE CONSTANCE, IN OLD ST. PAUL'S.

Dugdale.

occasions subsequently protested against the illegalities of the king, especially in respect of his manipulation of the wool trade. Edward made agreements with the foreign merchants to grant him a percentage on the wool which they bought in England, and defended his position by the specious argument that such a tax was paid by the foreigners. The Commons replied that the traders would merely deduct the percentage from the price which they would otherwise have paid to the producer; and eventually the king agreed not to make such arrangements in the future (1363). The assertion of the doctrine that taxation could only be imposed by Parliament was nothing new, but it became so much more decidedly established this time, that the Commons went so far as to attempt to appropriate supplies, granting one subsidy only on condition that it should be applied to the French war (1353). Another important step was the demand made by them to be allowed to audit the royal accounts. One such audit was taken, and the necessity for some sort of supervision was evidenced by the discovery that the exchequer officials had estimated the number of parishes in England at something like five times the real number. In the department of legislation, the petitions of either house acquired more and more weight and began to resemble more nearly the modern "Bills," while the royal ordinances were declared to have no effect until they had been entered on the rolls of Parliament. Finally, the introduction of the practice of impeachment—that is, of the Commons accusing unsatisfactory ministers

before the Lords—marks the beginning of ministerial responsibility. The first instance of this appears at the close of the reign, when Lancaster's adherents were accused in the Good Parliament. It gave to the people for the first time, the power of removing such advisers of the Crown as were not acceptable to them, and proved in later times to be one of the chief bulwarks of popular liberty. In other matters, the voice of the Commons was as yet rarely heard. Edward III. applied to them more than once for an expression of opinion in the French war, but they only interfered by request, and once actually declined to tender advice at all. It is asserted by some that the king's object was merely to shift the responsibility from his own shoulders.

The importance of the last years of Edward III. lies in the appearance of the earliest parliamentary parties of English history. The very fact that those who were contending for the exercise of that authority, which the king could no longer wield, sought to secure the support of the Commons, is in itself an indication of the increased importance of that body. The disasters of the French war led to the removal of Wykeham; the Black Prince's fear for the inheritance of his son contributed to that of Lancaster, and the lack of a prominent leader was the undoing of the Good Parliament. But in each one of these changes the Commons had their share, and in each they asserted their right to correct abuses of administration. It was to them that the country looked to punish the scandalous corruption of John of Gaunt's *clientèle*, and it was by means of a packed House that the duke regained his supremacy.

It may be suggested that the power of removing bad ministers, or of examining their conduct, was the necessary outcome of the newly acquired right of controlling the national finances. As soon as the Commons had secured that no taxation should be levied without their consent, they naturally proceeded to attempt the regulation of the expenditure, and, as the ministers were responsible for that expenditure, they were necessarily liable to be called to account. Thus the right of Impeachment was the almost logical outcome of rights previously won, and, in a measure, the packing of the Commons by Lancaster is a more surprising event than the punishment of his ministry by the Good Parliament. It is remarkable that a man of the wealth and rank of John of Gaunt, a prince of the blood, and incomparably the greatest noble in the land, should have been obliged to rely upon a body the very permanency of which had been but recently established. This fact shows that the eighty-five years which had elapsed since the inauguration of Edward I.'s experiment had seen great changes in the government of England, and it may be regarded as the first indication of that power which was gained by Parliament under the Lancastrian dynasty.

At the same time, the fact that John of Gaunt, despite his unpopularity, was able by his wealth and territorial influence to pack a House of Commons, shows the real weakness of that body. The successful attack of the Good Parliament upon the Lancastrian ministry was due principally to the support of the Black Prince. Peter de la Mare, the Speaker of that Parliament, was, after all, really the mouthpiece of the

heir to the throne, and his independence may be attributed, without unfairness, to his position as seneschal to the Earl of March. Indeed, in every case, it was necessary for each party in the Commons to secure the countenance of some great noble—the representatives of the people could not yet stand alone ; and, while there was this dependence upon the Baronage, the measures of the Parliament were practically dictated by the enemies of true liberty. However the nobles might occasionally find that their interests coincided with those of the Lower House, yet ultimately the government of England rested with a single class. It will be seen how this necessity of seeking baronial support, this lack of ability to lead among the members themselves, caused anarchy under the Lancastrians, and contributed to the establishment of a strong Monarchy and a temporary suspension of Parliamentary activity under the House of York.

In one respect, the rule of Lancaster assisted the growth of liberty in England. The duke had alienated the other nobles, and, either from inclination or necessity, he filled the council with "small men." His chief adherents were Lords Latimer and Nevill, retainers of his house, and Richard Lyons, a London merchant. When the Good Parliament met, no one dared openly to attack John of Gaunt, but the Commons were able to strike at him through his friends. Now, it is alleged that Lancaster shared in the ill-gotten gains of his subordinates, and, if this is true, he was the real culprit, since it was by his connivance alone that those gains were amassed, and the fact

that he was allowed to escape personally shows the impunity which a great noble at that time enjoyed. The employment of men of lower rank in high offices was therefore advantageous; if Lancaster had been supported by other great barons, he and his ministry would have escaped, a fact which he realised when too late. As it was, Impeachment was invented and used, and the lessons of the Good Parliament were remembered in subsequent reigns. Having been able once to punish bad ministers, the Commons were encouraged to make the attempt again, and henceforward the fear of being called to account acted as a salutary check upon the heads of the executive.

In the early years of Richard II., the privileges of the Commons were confirmed and reasserted. The control of the exchequer and the auditing of accounts were recognised as being within their jurisdiction, and the personnel of the council was modified by the impeachment of a royal favourite, and by the appointment of a commission of reform. The progress of the Commons was checked by Richard's assumption of power, and in the second part of the reign Parliament appears as a mere instrument in the hands of the king, used by him against the baronial party. But during the half-century from 1350 to 1399, there was much constitutional progress. Parliament became a permanency; a return to the old system was no longer possible; while the final act of the reign did more than establish a collateral branch of the dynasty upon the throne—it also changed the character of the Monarchy and introduced a new theory of government.

The growth of the power of the Commons was facilitated by the decline of the Baronage and of the Church, and was accompanied by an improvement in the position of the lowest class. The circumstances of the French war, as has been already pointed out, contributed in no small degree to the decline of the nobles. The victories of Creçy and Poitiers had proved that the heavy-armed cavalry were not invincible, and that the importance of infantry had been underestimated. Henceforth, the bulk of the army was no longer composed of feudal lords and their retainers. A class of professional soldiers was arising throughout Europe, and they were hired in large numbers by Edward III. At Navarette the larger part of the Black Prince's army was composed of mercenaries. And though the consequent taxation weighed heavily upon the people, they gained eventually by the decline of their natural enemies, and even, to a certain extent, rose in importance as a result of being employed as soldiers. The help of the Baronage was no longer essential in time of war, and the king was freed from his dependence upon it. Moreover, the war was begun for reasons which did not appeal to the nobles, and though its character was partially modified in order to gain their support, the interest in trade, which had led Edward to attack France, was one of the chief features of his internal policy. The king devoted great attention to the regulation of commerce; he introduced the first manufactures, and he consistently favoured the merchant classes. Royal patronage was then essential to commerce, and it resulted in a growth of trade and

of wealth to the cities, which was detrimental to the interests of the barons. Year by year money became more and more the source of power; year by year the commoners grew richer and the barons relatively poorer.

Moreover, they were affected unfavourably by an indirect result of Edward's interest in trade, for as commerce increased the navy became more important. In any case, the barons would have been useless at sea, but the peculiar constitution of the English navy caused it to become an engine of popular liberty. To explain this, it is necessary to describe in some detail its organisation under Edward III. In the first place, it may be premised that there was practically no royal navy. The larger vessels—the "cogs" and "fluves"—were, perhaps, the property of the government; but the bulk of the fleet consisted in merchantmen and fishing boats pressed or chartered for each particular occasion. There are constant notices of demands being sent to various ports to prepare ships to accompany the king, or to operate against France and Scotland. They were manned and often commanded, in all probability, by their original crews and captains, since it is obvious that there was difficulty in finding sailors, because when the crews of certain ships struck for their pay Edward was obliged to give way and to pay them in advance. The command of the whole navy was generally entrusted to two admirals—one having jurisdiction from Bristol to the Straits of Dover, the other from the Thames to Berwick. Throughout Edward's reign great attention was paid to the navy. As already men-

tioned, men were often specially summoned to the council to advise concerning it. An attempt was made to improve the English shipbuilding by imitating foreign methods, and regulations for settling maritime disputes were laid down. But in a way the chief importance of this naval activity is that it marks an advance in the importance of the non-landed population. The crews of the ships were drawn from the peasantry ; the admirals even were very rarely of higher rank than knights ; and since the lesser barons had coalesced with the burgesses, the Commons acquired a new weight. They were directly connected with the navy, for the towns supplied the ships and the shires the officers, and, when invasion from France could only be avoided by the maintenance of an efficient fleet, the support of the class which provided and manned the ships was of vital importance to the government. Consequently the navy had a great, though indirect, share in the promotion of constitutional progress. It is not merely accidental that the growth of the Commons coincides with increased maritime activity, and in this side of the national life the Baronage had no share.

While its importance thus declined in many ways, the character of the Baronage was greatly modified during this period. In the earlier portion of English history the baronial risings had been directed against the royal encroachments upon the privileges of an order, or, more rarely, the general liberties of the country. But after the time of Edward III. they were intended to effect a change in the dynasty.

And in the policy of that king and of his grandfather may be found the causes of this changed state of affairs. The legislation of Edward I., by preventing sub-infeudation and the granting away of lands, tended ultimately to stereotype the existing divisions and to perpetuate the great estates. The statute of *Quia Emptores* tended to discourage further partition, in so far as it prevented sub-infeudation; the statute of Mortmain prohibited the granting of land to the Church, save under strict regulations; and the clause *De Donis Condicionalibus* allowed the entailing of estates. And the vast extent of lands which thus accumulated in the power of one man made the great barons almost kings in their own districts. Edward III. elaborated a course of policy which his grandfather had originated, and attempted to concentrate these great estates in the hands of members of his own family. By grants and by a series of judicious marriages his sons were exalted to positions of great importance. John of Gaunt affords the most striking example. He was created Earl of Richmond, and by his marriage with the heiress of the house of Lancaster he acquired also the duchy of Lancaster and the earldoms of Derby, Leicester, and Lincoln. He possessed lands of enormous extent, and his wealth was proportionately great; and his power was further increased by the marriage of his son to Mary de Bohun, by which Henry acquired the earldoms of Hereford, Essex, and Northampton. Edward's object in permitting this accumulation of lands by one man was to base his throne upon surer foundations; but actually it had exactly the contrary

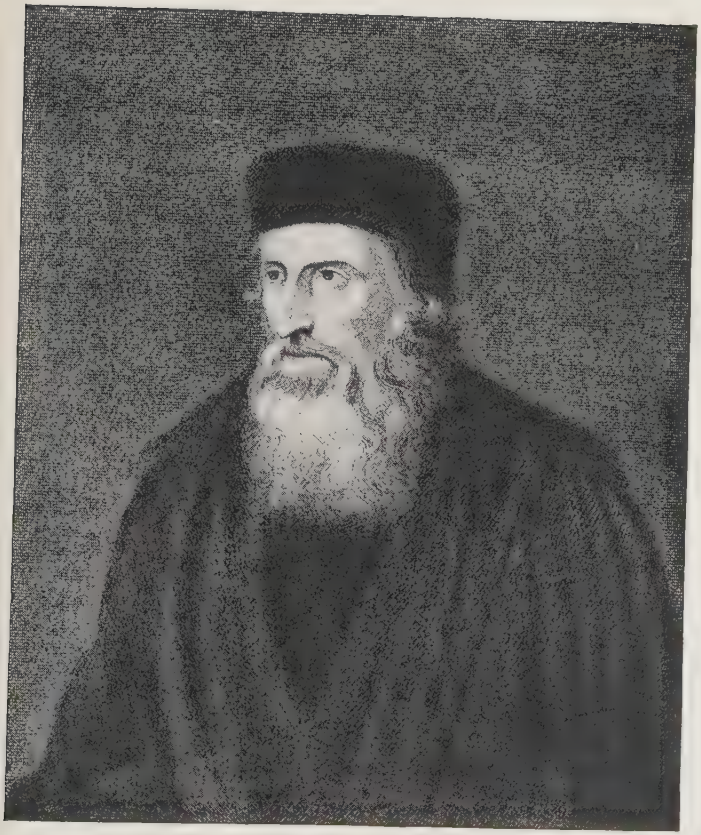
effect. Hitherto the mutual jealousies of the great barons prevented any combination to alter the dynasty, and great as might be the leader of the baronial party, he was not great enough to stretch out his hand and grasp the sceptre. But henceforth the greatest barons were so near the throne that it was but a small thing to step upon it, while their royal birth gave them even more influence and prestige than they would otherwise have had. Further, Edward III. deserted the wise policy of William I., and permitted the concentration of a number of estates in one part of the country in the hands of a single man. So at the very time when feudalism was dying out the worst features of the system were perpetuated—it might almost be said, introduced—by the short-sighted and misguided policy of the king. The "overmighty subject," whose existence was so deplored by the wise Judge Fortescue, appears; and the good accomplished by the growth of Parliament was partially neutralised. Fortunately for England other changes which took place at the same time served to counteract the new danger to liberty.

It has been already shown that the cities grew greater during this period; it remains to describe how the condition of the middle and lower classes was changed, and changed for the better, and, in this connection, to discuss the teaching of Wycliff and the Peasants' Revolt. Upon the life of that great man it is impossible to dwell, but his work requires attention, both on its religious and on its political side. And here it is necessary to describe the condition

of the Church, in order that Wycliff's aims may be rightly understood. That body had suffered both from external and internal causes. The Papacy, which had almost become discredited by the "Babylonish Captivity,"[1] was soon afflicted by the Great Schism, and the whole of Christendom was scandalised by the appearance of two Vicars of Christ. But still more serious was the corruption which characterised the clergy, from the court of Rome to the "mendicant" friars. The wealth and greed of the Church was patent to all. In vain did the Statute of Mortmain prohibit the further granting of lands, save with the consent of the superior lord; the ingenuity of the lawyers invented "Uses,"[2] and the law remained almost a dead letter. An even more crying abuse than the vast riches of the Church was the encroachments of the Papacy. Two important statutes were directed to cope with this evil. That of Provisors (1351) forbade the practice of "providing" for vacancies, by which the Popes filled English benefices with non-resident foreigners and took the first-fruits many times from the same benefice by appointing men to it before the vacancy actually occurred. The Statute of *Praemunire* (1392) prohibited, under severe penalties, the introduction of papal bulls, the exercise of legatine authority, and appeals to Rome without the royal permission. But, admirable as

[1] That is, the seventy years' residence of the Popes at Avignon, instead of at Rome. The Great Schism followed, an anti-Pope being elected at Avignon on the death of Gregory XI. (1378).

[2] A practice by which a man left his estates to another for the "Use" of a third person, or body; all the revenues of the lands then went to the third party.



JOHN WYCLIFF (? 1324–1384).

Engraved by E. Finden, from a portrait attributed to Antonio Moro, now an heirloom in the Rectory of Wyclif-on-Tees.

these enactments were, they did not cover the whole ground of complaint. The abuses of the ecclesiastical courts and the reckless profusion of the great clergy continued, while the bishops and abbots were occupied with worldly rather than heavenly matters, and the monks and friars forgot their vows of poverty in the pursuit of gold. Only the poor parish priests performed their real duties; elsewhere lust, greed, and hypocrisy reigned supreme. The literature of the period bears eloquent testimony to the universal corruption. Chaucer satirised the almoners, summoners, and pardoners, the greedy hirelings of the court of Rome; he lifted the veil of superstition, and openly attacked the vices of the monks and friars, who had escaped censure by virtue of the sacred office they abused. Langland, in despairing tones, described the flight of Virtue from a God-forsaken world. But more effective than the satire of Chaucer or the laments of Langland was the revolt against clerical abuses in the minds of the people. And here comes the first part—the religious side—of Wycliff's work. Supported by the University of Oxford, where he was for a time Master of Balliol College, he began to attack the existing corruption. He urged a return to apostolic poverty; he maintained that the clergy should be imitators of Christ, that they should preach and pray rather than intrigue, that they should abandon politics for the work to which they were called, and that they should, in short, labour in God's vineyard and not in man's. The bishops, headed by Courtenay of London, violently opposed him, but he received the powerful support of the

Duke of Lancaster and also of many of the barons. The latter were possibly attracted by the idea that Wycliff proposed a wholesale confiscation of the property of the Church, though in justice to the reformer it must be mentioned that all he really advocated was that the wealth of that body should be applied to the purposes for which it was originally intended—the furtherance of religion and the relief of the poor. But the change which presently took place in Wycliff's attitude deprived him of the majority of his more powerful friends. Finding that it was hopeless to attempt to secure the co-operation of the greater clergy in his schemes of moral reform, he began to attack the whole position, and eventually to assail the dogmas of the Church. But the minds of the people were not ready for such action. Wycliff lost his popularity and was expelled from Lutterworth, while the University, under strong compulsion, was induced to denounce his "heresy." He was forced to recant in some measure his more revolutionary views, and in this way regained his living and died there in peace. Yet his work, even on the religious side, was not without fruit. He completed, in his retirement, that labour of love with which his name is indissolubly connected—the translation of the Bible. And he sent, for the furtherance of his views, his "Poor Priests" over the country, who travelled on foot from place to place, living rebukes to the rich and arrogant monks and friars. They taught the people to read, and reading led to thought. The Lollards sprang into existence, and they were the pioneers of religious

and political progress. On the one hand, the dogmatic teaching of the Church was called in question; on the other, the masses ceased to be sheep under the hands of baronial butchers, and formed a weak but growing popular party.

Wycliff, however, was not merely a religious reformer, and his political teaching is also important. His tract *De Dominio Civili* embodied his views upon temporal matters. Starting with the premise that all power is from God, he declared that there was no representative of Christ on earth, or rather that every man had his particular "dominion," if he were in a state of grace, and that those who were not in that state could have no true authority. Wycliff qualified his statement by adding that in this world "God must obey the Devil"; that the powers that be, must be respected, though unrighteous. But many who heard his original theory neglected his qualification, and the ideas, which may be ultimately traced to his writings, and which spread over the country, were revolutionary and popular. They were used by agitators, like the famous John Ball, to fan the already existing discontent, and they were one of the causes of the Peasants' Revolt.

But that movement was not merely, or even principally, the result of the preaching of political theorists; it was the outcome of an economic revolution. During the whole of the preceding century, a complete, though gradual, change had been taking place in the condition of England. The old manorial system was giving way. In earlier times, the peasantry had been villeins, more or less attached

to the soil, treated, to a certain extent, as chattels and forced to perform certain definite services in return for their plots of ground. But various causes had contributed to change all this. The cities afforded protection to escaped villeins, who became free after an undisputed residence of a year and a day within the walls. The tendency to convert arable land into pasture rendered the villeins' services less requisite, and when such work was needed, the landowners found it more to their interests to hire men to perform it, since forced labour was naturally unsatisfactory. The French War, too, had caused a great influx of wealth into the country in the shape of booty, and this gave a further impetus to the movement. The practice of commuting villein service for a fixed money payment grew rapidly, and, owing to the non-enforcement of the laws, a class of free labourers arose, without fixed homes, who hired themselves out where workers were needed.

At the same time, the peasants began to desire personal liberty. Their prosperity, under the altered conditions, made them proud, and their pride took the reasonable form of a desire for freedom. Forced labour was held to be a degradation, but as yet, it was very hard for a villein to escape from it legally. The first great cause of the Peasants' Revolt may be found in this desire, if the expression may be used, to legalise past illegalities; to make it possible for the villein to become a freeman, by other means than a flight to a town or to a distant part of the country; and more, to abolish altogether the old system of compulsory labour.

The natural economic effect of the Black Death was to cause a great scarcity of labour, and the survivors attempted to benefit from the national calamity by obtaining higher wages. This attempt was met by the Statute of Labourers, which fixed wages and forbade the servant to ask, or the employer to give, higher remuneration. Much abuse has been levelled against this enactment, as a piece of infamous class legislation, but, though it was unpopular and detrimental, it was not intended to benefit one section of the community. For it provided that the clergy should not, as they had tried to do, charge higher fees for burials than they had done before the plague, and it was, in short, the object of the statute to prevent any one from reaping advantage from the misfortunes of the community. Like most attempts to regulate labour, it failed; the barons, themselves, evaded the law in order to save their crops, and its chief effect was to increase the discontent of the peasantry.

Again, there were other contributory causes. The central government was weak and there was much disorder in the country, where the local magnates and their retainers oppressed their lesser neighbours. The very prosperity of the villeins was the result of actions punishable by law, and men who had grown rich despite the government might be expected to rise readily against it. Finally, there were a number of lesser grievances; vexatious incidents of the manorial systems, which contributed to initiate the people still further; and the heavy taxation, culminating in the imposition of the poll-tax, seems to have been the last incentive to revolt.

The upheaval was a great protest on the part of a hitherto inarticulate population. It was in every way a popular rising. There were no great leaders; Wat Tyler, the most famous, was but the head of a section. The demands put forward by the rebels show what manner of men they were; personal liberty and the commutation of personal services for a fixed rent were the professed objects which they had in view. They attacked all who were not with them, especially John of Gaunt's friends and the clergy, and they destroyed a great deal of useful historical material in the shape of manorial rolls. The revolt was soon ended, and it appeared to have failed completely. The Commons combined with the Lords to urge Richard not to fulfil his promises to the rebels; the previously existing sympathy with their demands disappeared, and there was no legislation in the direction of liberty for the villeins. The ultimate extinction of villeinage was due rather to gradual concessions than to positive measures, and the Rising, by causing a feeling of hatred towards the peasantry in the minds of the middle and upper classes, may even have tended to perpetuate the very evils against which it was a protest. But it was not wholly futile. Henceforward, the lords feared the villeins, and were careful not to risk a repetition of the events of 1381. And the longing for personal liberty was not quelled. The peasants adopted an attitude of passive resistance and refused to work except under compulsion; and, as they tendered money in commutation, the landowners found it more to their interest to hire men to do their work.

Finally, it was a clear sign that Feudalism, or rather the feudal land system, was an anachronism, and it is a landmark in the history of its decline and fall.

It remains to sum up the results of fifty years. They are marked by a series of great changes in the state of England. The new foreign policy necessitated changes in the military and naval systems which acted to the disadvantage of the Baronage, who were further injured by the increased importance of the commercial classes. At the same time the Commons, united and in a separate house, asserted their independence. As yet they do not fill the place of the great nobles; they still depend upon baronial support, and are led by barons, but they had obtained a greater weight in the country. At least Parliament is a permanency, and the Lower House a force which cannot be ignored. And the nobles are no longer really feudal, while the character of the Monarchy is changed by the transference of the crown, through the medium of Parliament, to another dynasty. The Church was assailed, and has now to choose between reform and the loss of public respect. The people have asserted themselves, and the lowest class of all has freed itself from the onerous burdens which crushed it hitherto. Yet the time is one full of danger as well as of hope. The nobles are divided already, and a great faction fight looms in the distance. For the time the head of one faction has acquired the crown, and it is for the new dynasty to attempt the solution of three problems. It has to decide what is to be the position of Parliament and its relation to the executive; it has to

secure its title to the throne; and it has to cope with the danger of the "overmighty subject." The history of the next sixty years is an account of the success or failure of the attempt of the Lancastrians to solve these questions.

IV

THE CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERIMENT

(1399–1461)

THE indictment against Richard II., as drawn up by the Parliament, declared that he had forfeited the throne through his misgovernment, which had rendered him unfit for his position, and though the Duke of Lancaster "challenged" the crown and asserted his hereditary right, he really ascended the throne by the will of Parliament. Asserting its ancient privilege as the constitutional heir of the Witenagemot and of the National Council, that body declared the most suitable member of the royal house to be king. The hereditary heir was undoubtedly the Earl of March, but he was a child, and the representatives of the nation therefore passed him over in favour of Henry, a man of full age, of experience, and the next prince of the blood. It was in vain that the new king asserted his superior right, and invented or repeated current fictions to sustain it.[1]

[1] Henry alleged the story that Edmund of Lancaster was the elder brother of Edward I., and that, as his representative, he had a prior claim to the throne.

The fact remained, that by the will of Parliament the succession had been changed, and consequently Henry IV. was largely dependent on the same will for his maintenance upon the throne. For the same reason his position was insecure. While he had been the first subject of Richard II., he had enjoyed the support of the barons; but, with the crown, he acquired also the hostility of the great nobles. The very men who had been his firmest supporters as duke were his chief enemies as king. The success of his rebellion encouraged others to make similar attempts, and his reign is marked by the beginning of those risings which culminated in the Wars of the Roses, by plots which professedly aimed at his deposition in favour of Richard II., which were really intended to place the crown once more at the disposal of Parliament, each great baron hoping that upon him the choice might fall.

Before Henry had been a year on the throne he was called upon to face a plot, formed by the leaders of the opposition in the last reign. In his first Parliament the acts of the last eleven years were reversed, and as a result the earls of Rutland, Salisbury, Huntingdon, and Kent were deprived of the more exalted titles which had been granted them by Richard. They therefore united in a conspiracy for the restoration of the deposed king, and prepared to kidnap Henry at Windsor. The treachery of Rutland betrayed their plans. They were obliged to fall back on the West, but the people were against them. At Cirencester they were captured by the citizens, and the earls of Kent and Salisbury executed.

KING HENRY IV. (1367–1413).
From his Tomb.

Huntingdon was put to death in Essex, and many of the less important leaders suffered a like fate (1400). But though this conspiracy came to nothing, it showed already how insecure was Henry's position, and gave an indication of the true feelings of the barons. An immediate result was the death of Richard, who was almost certainly put to death by Henry's orders. In order to silence all doubts, his body was exhibited publicly in London, but there were many who believed that he had escaped from prison, and at a later date a pretender appeared at the Scottish court, claiming to be the deposed king, really a certain Thomas Ward, of Trumpington.

Soon after the collapse of Huntingdon's plot, a serious rebellion broke out in Wales. Owen

Glendower, a descendant of the old native princes, had been staunch in his adherence to Richard II., and had been taken prisoner with him. After his release he had engaged in a lawsuit with Lord Grey of Ruthyn, and he attributed the loss of his case to the influence of Henry. Accordingly, he levied war upon his rival, and having defeated an expedition sent against him, proclaimed himself Prince of Wales, and maintained his independence in the mountains (1401). At the same time Henry became involved in hostilities with France and Scotland. Charles VI. demanded the restoration of the dowry of his daughter, Isabella, the widow of Richard II., and when Henry refused to return it, the French attacked Guienne, threatened the south coast, and sent help to Glendower. In Scotland the Duke of Albany, who was regent for his imbecile brother, Robert III., allowed attacks to be made upon the English border. Henry retaliated by invading the Lothians, but, though he reached Leith, the Scotch refused to give him battle, and he was soon obliged to retire, owing to lack of supplies. In the following year Albany attacked Carlisle. As he was returning, the Percies met him at Homildon Hill and inflicted a severe defeat upon him, capturing his son, the Earl of Fife, and the Earl of Angus, the head of the Douglas family (1402).

But this victory led indirectly to the most serious rising with which Henry had to cope. He owed his crown in no small degree to the Percies, and they complained that he had been ungrateful to them. Various causes led them to rebel. Glendower had captured Mortimer and Ruthyn, and the king, while allowing the

latter to be ransomed, refused to permit the former to be released, probably because he was the uncle of the Earl of March. As Mortimer was a relative of the Percies, this afforded them cause for complaint. Again, Henry neglected to discharge a heavy money debt which he owed to the Earl of Northumberland, and finally, after the battle of Homildon Hill, he took the captured Earl of Fife into his own hands, thus disappointing the Percies of the large ransom for which they had hoped. They accordingly entered into negotiations with the Scotch and with Glendower, freed Douglas without ransom, and raised a large army to depose the king. They were joined by the supporters of Richard II., so that all Henry's enemies were united in the revolt. But as they moved across England to join forces with Glendower, the Percies were interrupted by the royal army at Shrewsbury. The ensuing battle proved decisive. The younger Percy, the famous Henry Hotspur, was killed, and all the leaders, except Northumberland, captured (1403). Henry advanced northwards with an overwhelming force, and the earl presently surrendered. The king then triumphed, but he was not strong enough to take full vengeance, and was obliged to acquiesce in the decision of the House of Lords, that Northumberland had not committed treason, and to release him on payment of a fine.

Another rebellion followed shortly afterwards. Taking advantage of Henry's absence in the West, Percy again rose, and was joined by Mowbray and by Scrope, Archbishop of York. The return of the King ended the rising. Northumberland fled to

Scotland, and his two friends were executed (1405). Still Henry's position was very insecure, and only a series of fortunate accidents gave him peace. In the first place, after a naval victory off Portland had freed him from the immediate fear of invasion from France, the outbreak of civil war in that country rendered it powerless. In the second place, the capture of James, the heir to the throne of Scotland, on his way to France gave him a useful hostage. The prince was kept in honourable captivity, and, as Henry had the Earl of Fife also in his hands, he secured the neutrality of both parties in that kingdom. The capture and death of Northumberland removed the last of his enemies (1408), and the closing years of his reign were peaceful. He concluded marriage alliances with Castile, Navarre, and Aragon, as well as with the Empire and Scandinavia, and this raised the reputation of his family.[1] The Church, as a whole, and the Commons gave him support at home, and Glendower was confined to Wales, where he maintained a precarious independence until his death.

He was, therefore, able to turn his attention to French affairs. Charles VI. had taken advantage of Henry's difficulties to encourage the revolt of Guienne, where the people had refused to recognise the deposition of Richard. And the French had also assisted Glendower's rebellion and quarrelled with the English concerning Isabella. An invasion

[1] One of his sisters was Queen of Castile, another Queen of Aragon. Henry married a princess of Navarre; one of his daughters married the King of Denmark, and another the son of the Emperor.

of England was proposed, and would have been carried out had not the imbecility of Charles VI. led to internal strife. But the disputes of the dukes of Burgundy and Orleans weakened France, and Henry perpetuated this condition of affairs by siding now with one, now with the other. When the murder of the Duke of Orleans led to open civil war, the Burgundians were supported by Henry, and by this means won the battle of St. Cloud (1411). For a time the Orleanists were powerless, and agreed to cede all Guienne to England as a price of help. Henry prepared to take possession of the provinces, but a temporary understanding was effected between the rival parties, and they united to oppose England. War broke out between the two countries. The Duke of Clarence overran Tourraine and Maine, and, having been bought off by the people of those provinces, was proceeding to reduce Guienne, when Henry IV. died.

Like most kings who had succeeded to the throne in defiance of hereditary right, Henry was an able ruler. Not only did he overcome opposition at home, but he also showed the appreciation of England's true interests in his foreign policy. By alternately assisting both parties, he kept France in a state of weakness, and thus attained all Edward III.'s objects without risking a war. But his son deserted this cautious policy in favour of a more attractive, but less politic, course. To his advice the dispatch of an army at the close of the reign may be fairly attributed, and very soon after his accession Henry V. committed a grave blunder by renewing the

Hundred Years' War and reviving the claim to the French throne. His reasons for doing so were complex, and it is important to notice them, since they showed to a certain extent a reactionary spirit. It has been pointed out that Edward III. fought really for English trade; that his other reasons for war were subsidiary. But Henry V. was led to embark upon vast projects of conquest by a mistaken political wisdom. He hoped to turn the attention of the people from his own weak title by satiating them with success in war, to secure his dynasty by covering it with military glory, to employ the restless nobles in foreign instead of in domestic strife, to turn the attention of his subjects from internal affairs, and to solve the problems of the time by postponing their consideration. Indeed, his course was altogether unsound. It could only succeed as long as the war was a victorious one. Defeat would lead to a recrudescence of existing difficulties, and in a more acute form, and such a result was inevitable. The conquest of France was a chimerical project, impossible of attainment, and the attempt of Henry V. only postponed the crisis in England. It led to the disorder of his son's reign, to the Wars of the Roses, and to the consolidation of the very country which it had been proposed to conquer.

And yet the war began with fair hopes of success. Indeed, never has the reduction of a country seemed more possible. Charles VI. dragged out his existence at Paris, still nominally king of France, but really a card-playing imbecile, occasionally violent, and at rare intervals comparatively sane. The right

to rule in his name was fiercely disputed between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs—the old party of Orleans. Paris was the scene of constant riots, and open war existed between the rivals. Divided against itself, France was, indeed, in no condition to resist the English, and Henry had good cause to hope that he would succeed where Edward III. had failed. He won over the Duke of Burgundy to a neutral attitude, and then proceeded to treat with the temporary ruler of France, the Duke of Guienne, the king's eldest son. The terms proposed were such that their rejection was inevitable. Henry demanded the absolute cession of all the territory acquired by Edward III. at the treaty of Bretigni, with the addition of Normandy, Maine, Tourraine, Anjou, and Picardy, and the homage of Brittany and Flanders, and further claimed the balance of John's ransom and the hand of Catherine, daughter of Charles VI., with a large dowry. As he began at the same time to raise a fleet and army, and even to embark his troops, it is clear that he was insincere even in these outrageous proposals, and that they were merely put forward that their rejection might give an excuse for attack. As a matter of fact, negotiations were still nominally pending when he sailed, although his departure had been hindered. For, upon the eve of embarkation, he discovered a serious conspiracy, headed by the Earl of Cambridge, brother of the Duke of York, and husband of Anne Mortimer, sister of the Earl of March, and supported by Lord Scrope and Sir Thomas Grey. They proposed to restore Richard II., or, if he were dead, to place March upon

the throne, and so for the first time the superior hereditary claim of the Mortimers was brought forward. The three leaders were executed, and the plot thus ended, but its existence showed the unsettled condition of the country, and indicated the probable course of future opposition (1415).

For the present, however, the danger was averted, and Henry at once sailed to France, where he laid siege to Harfleur. The city made a determined defence, and its reduction cost the invaders the flower of their army. Too weak to advance into France and unable to return to England directly, owing to lack of transports, the English were compelled to march to Calais, where the necessary ships were awaiting them. But by adopting this course they invited attack. At Agincourt they were intercepted by a large army under the Constable D'Albret, and were only saved from certain destruction by the incompetence and rashness of the French general. He confined his army in a narrow plain, and the very numbers of the French made for their defeat. The first line was thrown into disorder by the English archers, the second was too near to allow the fugitives to escape, and in a short time the whole army was in disorder. Henry gained an overwhelming victory, and the Armagnacs were practically annihilated, all their leaders being killed or captured (1415). The English were again unable to follow up their success, and, marching to Calais, crossed to their own land.

Even this great national disaster did not put an end to the discord in France. The Dauphin created

the Count of Armagnac Constable, and thus showed that he was not prepared to make terms with the Burgundians. That party maintained its friendship with the English, so that the whole strength of France could not be exerted. And very soon the quarrel in France became more acute. The death of his two elder brothers made Charles, the king's third son, heir to the throne, and he was wholly in the interests of Armagnac. The queen, who attempted to use her position to influence her son, was expelled from Paris, and, to free themselves from all opposition in the city, the ruling party inaugurated a reign of terror. Without the city walls lay the Duke of Burgundy, who now received the support of the queen, and who awaited an opportunity to make himself master of the capital. Meanwhile the English had remained on the defensive, but now, after two years of comparative inaction, Henry again invaded France. His position was strengthened by the moral support of the Emperor Sigismund, who, after failing to mediate, had openly joined the English. There was no organised opposition to Henry's progress, and place after place was captured. At last, while the Burgundians entered Paris and massacred the Armagnacs, the English took Rouen and began to advance upon the capital (1419). The pressing danger induced the Dauphin to treat with the Duke of Burgundy, an apparent reconciliation was effected, but the surviving Armagnacs were not prepared to sacrifice their power and succeeded in persuading the prince to a step which perpetuated the quarrel. At a private interview on the bridge of

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

KING HENRY VI. (1421–1471).

From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery.

Montereau the duke was assassinated in the presence of Charles and with his consent (1419). The new duke at once threw himself into the arms of the English, all thoughts of reconciliation were abandoned, and Henry acquired the whole-hearted support of the queen, the Burgundians, and the citizens of Paris. Negotiations for a definite peace were opened, and in less than a year after the murder of the duke the Treaty of Troyes was signed. By it Henry was recognised as heir to the French throne and as regent during Charles VI.'s lifetime. He was to marry Catherine, the crowns of the two countries were to be permanently united, and both parties were to unite in reducing the rest of France (1420).

But the patriotism of the French nation revolted against this disgraceful agreement. The people rallied round the Dauphin and a new vigour appeared in his councils. A Castilian fleet won a naval victory in the Channel and brought Scotch auxiliaries to the help of Charles, and while Henry was celebrating his marriage in England, his brother, the Duke of Clarence, was defeated and slain at Beaugé (1421). The progress of the French was checked by the return of the English king and they were slowly pressed south of the Loire. But in the midst of his success Henry V. was attacked by fever, his health, never good, had been shattered by his campaigns, and he died, leaving a son of nine months old to succeed him (1422). Only a few days afterwards Charles VI. died also, and, in accordance with the treaty of Troyes, Henry VI. was proclaimed king of France as well as of England. At the

same time the Dauphin was crowned at Poitiers as Charles VII.

Henry V., on his deathbed, had named his two brothers, the dukes of Bedford and Gloucester, as regents for his son—the former to command in France, the latter in England. But the council denied the right of the king to regulate the government and modified the arrangements considerably. Bedford was declared to be regent and entrusted with the duty of reducing the rest of France to submission, while Gloucester was appointed "Protector and Defensor" of England in his brother's absence, though with such limitations to his authority that he was little more than the executive officer of the Council. Bedford at once set himself to complete the work of Henry V. He strengthened the all-important alliance with Burgundy by marrying the duke's sister, Anne; while Brittany was also brought into the league by another marriage, that of Margaret of Burgundy to Arthur, brother of the Duke of Brittany. And, as the Scottish auxiliaries had formed the best part of the French armies, he attempted to secure the northern kingdom by the release of James, on condition that he would prevent his subjects from assisting Charles VII. Having thus done his utmost to ensure success, Bedford crossed to France and began to reduce that country. At Verneuil (1424) he gained a great victory and not only checked the French, who had been making some progress, but drove them out of all the territory north of the Loire. This success, however, marked practically the culminating point of the English

good fortune, for soon afterwards the tide began to turn.

It was the Duke of Gloucester who dealt the first blow to the cause of his country. He set himself to secure the government of England and was supported by part of the Council, while Cardinal Beaufort, his uncle, led the opposition to him. Their quarrels naturally weakened the home government at a time when Bedford needed all the support he could get, and presently Gloucester did an even greater injury to his brother. Jacqueline of Hainault was the wife of a relative of the Duke of Burgundy and deserted him. She took refuge in England, where Gloucester took up her cause, married her and laid claim to her inheritance. He entered the Low Countries to secure his title, and, though he was defeated, the Duke of Burgundy was naturally angry at the attack upon his kinsman. It was only with great difficulty that Bedford prevented the rupture of the Burgundian alliance; as it was the ties between England and Burgundy were weakened, though the duke's forces united with the English in forming the siege of Orleans (1428).

That city was the key to Southern France and Charles VII. strained every nerve to retain it. But the besiegers made equally determined efforts. A large convoy was captured at Rouvray—in the battle of the Herrings (1429); the fall of Orleans seemed to be certain, and the French king began to prepare to abandon the contest. At this critical juncture there appeared at his court a maiden of Lorraine, who gave out that she was sent by Heaven to restore

the fortunes of her country. This was Joan of Arc, whose strange career forms one of the most remarkable episodes of the period. It is idle to speculate as to whether she was really convinced of the genuineness of her mission or was a patriotic impostor. In any case the superstition of the age enabled her to succeed. New vigour appeared in the French councils; the king was roused from his apathy; the soldiers no longer regarded the English as invincible. Orleans was relieved; the invaders were slowly driven back; and Charles was crowned at Rheims. Bedford found himself unable even to retain what he had won, and though Joan was captured the effect of her work remained. She was burnt as a witch at Rouen, a crime which did no good to the English cause. Bedford caused Henry to be crowned at Paris, but the weakness of his position was evident from the haste with which the young king was sent back to England. On every side, indeed, the French made progress, and the death of Anne of Burgundy led to a serious quarrel between the allies. Bedford, hoping to strengthen his cause, married Jacquetta of Luxemburg (1432), but he neglected to ask for the leave of the Duke of Burgundy, her overlord, who accordingly began to show an inclination to make peace with Charles VII. Meanwhile, the internal dissensions of England increased, and the presence of Bedford was necessary to preserve order. So desperate was his position that he opened negotiations; a great congress was held at Arras, where there appeared representatives from nearly every state in Europe (1435). But

Gloucester had managed to form a war party in England in opposition to his brother, and mainly through his influence the congress came to nothing. Just afterwards Bedford died and Burgundy made peace with France.

Thenceforward, the war was merely a series of English disasters. The country was exhausted and there was no one capable of filling the duke's place. The peace party at last concluded a marriage between Henry and Margaret of Anjou; but the terms were disgraceful for England and only purchased a brief truce. The battle of Formigny 1450 led to the loss of Northern France and three years later the last English army was defeated at Castillon. All Guienne was reconquered by the French and the state of England prevented any attempt to recover it. Thus, after about a century of intermittent warfare, the English attempt to found a continental monarchy ended in disaster, and Calais alone remained as a result of such a vast expenditure of blood and treasure.

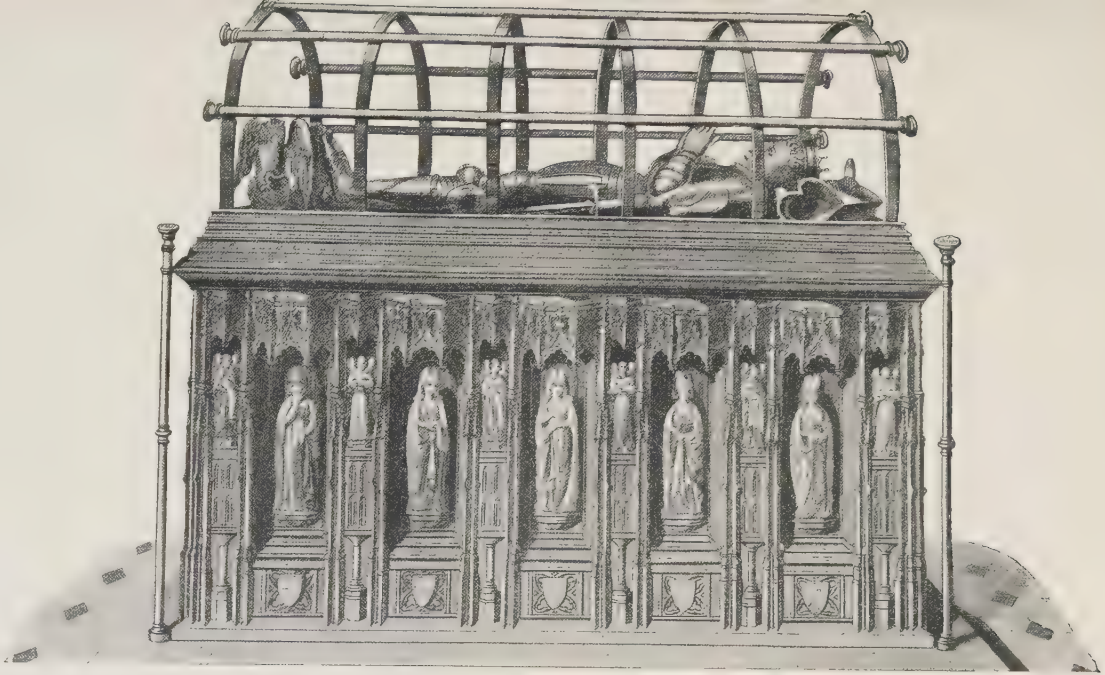
It has already been pointed out that the rivalry at home between Gloucester and Beaufort was a constant source of weakness to Bedford and contributed to the failure of the attempt to conquer France. When the duke died, the leadership of the moderate party—which desired any honourable peace—passed nominally to the Cardinal, but practically to De la Pole, Earl of Suffolk. It was he who negotiated the Treaty of Tours (1445), by which Henry married Margaret, and, as a result, he was violently attacked by Gloucester. Serious charges were

brought against him, but before they could be investigated both Gloucester and Beaufort died (1447). The character of the two parties was now greatly changed. The leadership of the opposition passed to Richard, Duke of York, the representative of the Mortimer family and heir to the throne; while the government relied upon the Beauforts, headed by the Duke of Somerset, and the new nobility, represented by Suffolk. In fact, the parties of the Wars of the Roses were definitely formed, and the character of each may be sketched at this point. The strength of the Lancastrians lay in the North and West, where they could reckon upon the Percies, the Beauforts, and the Ormonds. They were also supported by the branches of the royal house, the Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of Stafford, and by the Church. The Yorkists relied upon the families of Neville and Mowbray. The former house included the earls of Warwick, Salisbury, and Westmoreland; and they joined the opposition partly because the Duke of York had married a Neville, partly because they were hereditary enemies of the Percies. The Mowbrays were descendants of the rival of Henry IV., and were represented by the Duke of Norfolk. It was in the South and Midlands that the strength of the Yorkists lay, and as they stood forward as the champions of reform, they enjoyed the support of the towns. But the real cause of the quarrel was dynastic rivalry. The Lancastrians inherited the enmities of Richard II., and the Yorkists were the successors of the Lords Appellant. Whatever might be the ostensible policy of either

party, the struggle was really the same as that which had placed Henry IV. on the throne; it was a faction fight between two branches of the royal house.

The efforts of the opposition were directed first of all against Suffolk, who was duly impeached (1450). To save his friend's life, Henry banished him, but, on on his way to France, the minister was intercepted and executed, no doubt at the instigation of York. Somerset took the place of De la Pole, but his government was equally unpopular. The Duke of York had been sent away to Ireland to restore order in that country, and was thus condemned to a kind of honourable banishment; but when the news of the battle of Formigny arrived, the men of Kent rose under Jack Cade, and demanded the dismissal of Somerset and the return of York. The outbreak had hardly been quelled, when the duke appeared to urge the same demands in person. Taking advantage of Henry's absence in the West, he moved upon London; was deceived by the king and disbanded his forces, only to find that Somerset remained in favour. For a while peace was procured, but the country was in a condition of anarchy. The members of the two parties engaged in private wars, and it was obvious that an open attack upon the king was merely postponed.

One cause which led the Duke of York to refrain from an open attack upon Henry was the fact that he was heir to the throne, but this was presently removed by the birth of a Prince of Wales. Almost at the same time the king went out of his mind, and the duke was made Protector. His triumph now



RICHARD NEVILLE, EARL OF WARWICK (1428-1471).

From his monument in St. Mary's, Warwick.

seemed to be complete; but just as he was preparing to remove his rivals, Henry recovered. Somerset was restored to favour and York took up arms, giving out that he desired to save the king from his evil advisers. The first battle of the Wars of the Roses was fought at St. Alban's; the Lancastrians were totally defeated, Somerset was killed, and Henry taken prisoner (1455). Another short term of office as Protector was enjoyed by York, but the king again recovered, and the hollow reconciliation between the parties was soon broken. The opposition leaders retired from court and the government was entrusted to the queen and to the new Duke of Somerset. An attempt to punish Warwick for an act of piracy, which he had committed as Governor of Calais, led to the renewal of open war. The Lancastrians were defeated at Blorcheath, but the bulk of the victorious army deserted (1459). The Yorkist leaders fled, and were declared guilty of high treason in their absence. The triumph of Somerset was short. The Earl of Warwick gathered a new army at Calais; the Duke of York returned from Ireland. At the battle of Northampton the royalists were overwhelmed and the king again taken prisoner (1460). London was soon afterwards occupied by the Yorkists, and the duke now took the decisive step by laying claim to the throne. But Parliament was not prepared to depose Henry and a compromise was reached, by which the duke was recognised as heir and guaranteed the succession on the death of the present king. Margaret, however, would not allow her son to be disinherited; she raised an army in the north, and

at Wakefield the Duke of York was defeated and slain (1460). At St. Alban's she gained a second victory and recaptured her husband, but meanwhile the new Duke of York, having crushed the Lancastrians in the West at Mortimer's Cross, had occupied the capital and been proclaimed king as Edward IV. Margaret's army was undisciplined, and she could not prevent a retreat; Edward pursued her, and at Towton gained a decisive victory. Henry and his wife fled to Scotland, and, though the Civil War was not quite over, the Lancastrian monarchy came to an end (1461).

The accession of the House of York marks the failure of that constitutional experiment which forms the central feature of the internal history of the period immediately following on the deposition of Richard II. It has been already pointed out that Henry IV. owed his crown to Parliament, and the house of Lancaster was obliged to rely mainly upon the support of that body. As a natural result they ruled constitutionally, while the Commons secured the position to which they had already attained, and acquired fresh concessions from the necessities of the Crown. While, on the one hand, the king no longer attempted to raise illegal taxes, the Commons, on the other, appointed officers to control the expenditure and to audit the accounts. They secured the appropriation of supplies and insisted upon the redress of grievances being the preliminary of a grant, making the question of supply the last business of the session. And they gained the right to be the sole originators of money bills, although the principle was not per-

haps really embodied in the Constitution until a later date. The privilege of freedom of speech was acknowledged by the consent of Henry IV. to the reversal of the judgment against Sir Thomas Haxey, who had been imprisoned in the preceding reign for a speech made in the Commons. And in addition other privileges were asserted; the electoral body was defined, being limited for the first time under Henry VI. to a forty-shilling franchise in the counties, with residence both in counties and boroughs, and questions of public policy were discussed, the Treaty of Troyes being submitted to Parliament. In view of the increased importance of the Commons, the government sought to influence the elections and to increase the royal party by securing the choice of lawyers who always favoured the prerogative, but the Commons resisted both attempts, and, although packed houses became frequent, the "Unlearned Parliament" (1404) shows that the introduction of professional legists was successfully opposed. Finally, petitions by both Houses took the character of modern "bills" and became law on receiving the royal assent.

But, unfortunately for the country, the Commons were not content with absorbing the legislative power, they began to attempt to control the executive also. Already, by petition or by impeachment, they had procured the removal of ministers, and such power served as an useful check upon maladministration. When, however, they went further the results were disastrous for the country and for themselves. By their petition of Thirty-one Articles, in the reign of

Henry IV. (1406), they severely limited the prerogative. A council was, in accordance with this petition, to be established, responsible to Parliament, to supervise the government when the Houses were not sitting, and to be practically an executive committee. Such a measure had no bad results as long as the king was a man, but with the minority of Henry VI. it led to complete disorder. Jealous of their newly won greatness, Parliament refused to entrust large powers to the Regent and still less to the Protector and Defensor. Consequently the executive was weakened, and at the very time when a strong hand was most needed. It has been seen how the divisions in the Council weakened Bedford in France, and at home it led to that state of disorder which is depicted in the "Paston Letters." In the early years of Henry VI. Parliament attained to a position of importance, which it did not reach again until two hundred years later or more. But its growth was premature; it was incapable of organising the strong government which was required, and its failure led to its almost total extinction for a time. During the Wars of the Roses it sank to be a mere instrument in the hands of the predominant party; its functions were usurped by the Council, and it was merely used to give a show of legality to the measures of the rival leaders. In short, Parliament proved to be incapable of controlling the "overmighty subjects"; to be unfit to rule the country, and to be useful merely as a legislative and as an advisory body. But, at the same time, the very fact that it was not wholly ignored shows that its importance was recognised

and that its permanent existence was assured. In 1461 it was weaker than in 1399, because it had reached a certain point of importance and then declined, and had it not been for external circumstances it might have disappeared. As it was it lived; its independence had vanished, but there was the possibility of recovery.

The division among the nobles was the salvation of Parliament. Had the Baronage been united, it is probable that the course of English history would have been similar to that of France; the destruction of popular institutions being followed by a reaction in favour of the Monarchy and the establishment of a despotism based on the people. But, as it was, each party in the Baronage found the support, voluntary or involuntary, of Parliament, useful in the quarrel, and thus Yorkists and Lancastrians alike legalised their acts through the medium of the Commons. In more ways than one, the Wars of the Roses were a blessing in disguise. Not only did the quarrel preserve the existence of Parliament, but it also destroyed the nobles. In the battles of the civil war, and in the wholesale executions which followed the temporary triumph of either party, the Baronage was nearly exterminated. The "overmighty subjects" ceased to be, and a strong central government became possible once more. At the same time, England learnt the evils of a weak executive, and the old jealousy between the two branches of the government died out, not to be revived until the Commons were able to take the control of both into their own hands with reasonable hopes of success.

With the Baronage fell the Church as a political power in the country. She still supplied ministers, and her wealth remained great, but her influence was gone; the Church ceased to be the leader and instructress of the people. Yet, on the surface, her position was stronger than ever. The Lancastrians had been obliged to lean upon the clergy as well as upon Parliament, and the might of royal authority had been exerted against the enemies of the Church. The first persecuting statute of English history, the "De Heretico Comburrendo" (1401), had been enacted against the Lollards, and that party, though it continued to exist, ceased to be dangerous. Abroad, the Emperor Sigismund had assembled the Council of Constance where the "Great Schism" was at last healed and the unity of the Church restored, while the heretics of Bohemia suffered the same fate as their brethren in England. Everywhere the position of the Church was apparently improved, and the attacks upon her ceased. But this was merely a false peace; the calm before a greater storm. It gave her a last chance to reform herself and she lost it. The great ecclesiastics had learnt nothing; their vices and corruption increased; the respect of mankind was forfeited and no effort was made to regain it. Already the Renaissance had begun in Italy, accompanied by an open contempt for religion. While the English were being defeated in Guienne, the last Emperor of the East Romans fell in the great breach of the wall of Constantinople; and while Lancastrians and Yorkists were fighting, the fugitive Greeks were sowing the seeds of the New

Learning in Western Europe. As yet England remained in darkness, but the dawn was near; a dawn which was to prove a rude awakening for the spiritual leaders of the country, as yet absorbed in the pursuit of politics or pleasure. Having neglected the warning supplied by the Lollard movement, the Church had pronounced her own doom.

Despite the existence of much misery, the general condition of the people improved during the Lancastrian period. The evils with which they had to contend were great. In the weakness of the central power, the nobles found their opportunity. Private wars were frequent, especially in the north and west. The practice of "Maintenance" arose, by which the great lords "maintained" their clients in the courts of law, by terrorising judge and jury. There was no power capable of punishing them, and it was hopeless to expect justice against a retainer of a powerful baron. At the same time, the disorder of the country led to famine and pestilence; commerce was interrupted by the growth of piracy, the English navy was neglected, and the coasts of Ireland and England were ravaged by pirate fleets. But there were signs of improvement. Villeinage, already declining, practically disappeared; the towns were usually secure from the nobles, and, on the whole, the people benefited from the civil war, in which, generally speaking, they were not involved and by which they were, to a certain extent, freed from oppression. The Commons ceased to be drawn from the retainers of the nobles, and came to represent the people more closely. Moreover, although the New Learning had

not as yet spread to England, the two great Universities grew in importance and new colleges were founded, with the result that the standard of education rose and that the people began to be more qualified to assert their importance. It may be said that the evils of the time were transitory in their nature, while the improvements in the general conditions of life were permanent and important.

To review the period, it may be said that it was not really one of political progress. The constitutional rule of the Lancastrians ended in failure and the premature growth of Parliament was followed by a reaction. The "overmighty subjects" proved too strong for the Crown and the dynasty was again changed. But in one respect there was advance, although unconscious. The reactionary foreign policy of Henry V. ended in defeat, and the English, expelled from the Continent, were forced to turn to the sea. The period, which follows, is one of unrest. The Yorkists, like the Lancastrians, fail to secure their throne and the crown passes away to a new royal house. The history of the next twenty-five years is the history of the events which lead up to the establishment of the Tudor Monarchy.

V

THE HOUSE OF YORK

(1461–1485)

THE apparent result of the battle of Towton was to secure Edward IV. on the throne, and indeed for a time his position was unassailable. A packed parliament confirmed his title, declared the Lancastrian kings to have been usurpers, and annulled their acts. The whole country acknowledged the new monarch, and even such strong supporters of the late dynasty as the Percies and Somerset made their submission. These nobles, indeed, presently rebelled and raised the north, with the help of Queen Margaret and some French auxiliaries, but they were defeated by Lord Montague at Hedgely Moor and Hexham; and their death, after the latter battle, was an advantage for the king (1464). Shortly afterwards, Henry VI. was captured and imprisoned in the Tower, while Margaret took refuge at the court of Louis XI. The Lancastrian party, for a time, disappeared, and it seemed that the house of York was firmly established. But there was one

great source of weakness to Edward; his power rested upon the goodwill of one great family, and it might be said that he ruled by leave of the Earl of Warwick.

The epithet of "The Kingmaker" describes the share which that great baron had had in raising the house of York to the throne. Richard Neville, indeed, held a position which enabled him to ensure the success of whatever party he supported. He was himself by inheritance Earl of Salisbury, and by marriage Earl of Warwick also. He held vast estates in the North, in the Midlands, and in the South, and, in addition, was Governor of Calais and Warden of the Western Marches of Scotland. From his private lands and his public employments, he derived enormous wealth; his retainers were numbered by thousands, and his open-handed generosity and hospitality made him a great popular favourite. In addition to all this, he was head of the Nevilles and connected with all the chief families of England. One of his brothers, Lord Montague, already a powerful noble, received the lands of the Percies, with the earldom of Northumberland, after the battle of Hexham. His other brother was Archbishop of York and Chancellor. The earls of Arundel, Oxford, and Worcester had married his sisters, and Lord Stanley, the representative of the newer nobility, was another brother-in-law. This family had been the backbone of the Yorkist party; and Warwick had, by his influence and by his generalship, been the chief factor in the success of that house. He had advised the Duke of York to

claim the throne, and had won the battle of Northampton. The accession of Edward IV. appeared to consolidate his position, and his power was greater than had ever been wielded before by any subject; if he was the "last of the barons," he was also the greatest.

But the new king, either from carelessness or from design, quickly irritated his powerful subject. Warwick urged him to marry a foreign princess in order to secure his family by an alliance with another reigning house, but Edward disregarded this counsel, and instead took a step which could hardly fail to anger not only the Nevilles, but also many other Yorkists. This step was his marriage with Elizabeth Woodville (1465). She was the widow of Sir John Grey, the daughter of Lord Rivers by the Dowager Duchess of Bedford, and was thus a member of a thoroughly Lancastrian family. Such a marriage was almost certain to cause much opposition, but Edward's next acts served to anger his own supporters still more. He showered estates and titles upon the new queen's family, even depriving his tried friends of their offices for the benefit of the renegade Lancastrians. For a while the Nevilles continued to support the king, but to this marriage must be traced the beginning of a rupture which ended in the battle of Barnet.

The second cause of quarrel was a difference in foreign policy. Louis XI. of France was now engaged in his struggle with the house of Burgundy, and in this dispute Warwick and Edward took different sides. The king, probably owing to his

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

KING EDWARD IV. (1442–1483).

From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery.

interests in commerce, was in favour of an alliance with the duke; the earl aimed at a close union with the French. Soon after his wedding, Edward apparently gave way, and Warwick went to Paris to negotiate a marriage treaty between the king's sister, Margaret, and the French royal house. But while the earl was absent, the princess was betrothed to Charles the Rash, eldest son of the Duke of Burgundy (1466), and at the same time Edward showed his open hostility to the Nevilles by dismissing the Chancellor.

Warwick now threw himself into opposition. George, Duke of Clarence, the king's brother, was persuaded to become the nominal head of the malcontents, and married the earl's elder daughter. Risings took place in various parts of England, the queen's father and one of her brothers were captured and executed, and Edward himself was, for a time, a prisoner. The outbreak of a rebellion in favour of Henry VI. brought about a reconciliation, but this was recognised by all as being merely temporary. Shortly afterwards, a fresh rising in Lincolnshire was secretly supported by Warwick and Clarence, who had been commissioned to subdue it. Edward discovered their treachery and marched against them; the rebel army fled at his approach, and the two leaders took refuge in France (1470). Here they were well received by Louis, who found means to reconcile Warwick and Margaret of Anjou. A bargain was struck by which the son of Henry VI. was to marry the earl's younger daughter, and the Nevilles undertook to restore the Lancastrian dynasty.

Clarence was to succeed in event of the failure of Henry's direct heirs, but he was dissatisfied with this arrangement and secretly negotiated with his brother.

In pursuance of this compact, Warwick invaded England and was at once joined by the other members of his family. Edward had neglected to make any preparations for defence, and barely escaped to Flanders, while the "Kingmaker" occupied London and caused Henry VI. to be recrowned. But the Yorkist party did not accept the change, and Edward, having landed with a small force of Burgundians, was quickly joined by Clarence. Slipping past Warwick, he re-entered London, which city gladly welcomed him, and then, with an increased force, prepared to meet the Lancastrian army. The decisive battle was fought at Barnet, and ended in a complete victory for the king, Warwick and Montague being both killed (1471). A few weeks later, Margaret, who had landed at Weymouth, was defeated at Tewkesbury, as she was trying to reach Wales; she herself was captured and her son murdered in cold blood. The defeat of a naval attack upon London and the assassination of Henry VI. were the final blows to the Lancastrian party, which was now represented by the earls of Oxford and Pembroke, and Henry of Richmond, who were refugees in Brittany.

Relieved from all danger at home, Edward now turned his attention to foreign affairs. As has been seen, Louis XI. had assisted the Lancastrian party, and, consequently, Charles the Rash, now Duke of

Burgundy, had little difficulty in persuading the English king to attack France. But though he landed in Normandy with a large army, Edward was not very much in earnest, and the failure of his allies to fulfil their promise of co-operation further weakened him in his purpose. Louis scattered bribes lavishly among the members of the English Council, and a personal meeting between the two kings was arranged. At Pecquigny, a peace was concluded (1475). In return for a large sum in ready money — an annual pension — and the promise of the Dauphin's hand for Princess Elizabeth, Edward agreed to evacuate France and to abandon Charles. The war was not very glorious for either party; but such an ending was much better for both countries than a revival of Henry V.'s schemes. Louis bought the consolidation of his kingdom, while England was saved by the avarice of her king from a struggle which would have been disastrous.

On his return from France, Edward gave himself up to the pursuit of pleasure, and the last years of his reign are marked by few important events. For a while, indeed, it seemed possible that the ambition of Clarence might lead to a renewal of civil war. He had quarrelled with his younger brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, concerning the inheritance of Warwick. As already mentioned, Clarence had married the earl's elder daughter, and after the battle of Barnet, Gloucester married the younger. The result was a violent dispute, which was settled by the king and Parliament. But Clarence considered that he had been wronged, and when, after

his wife's death, he was prevented by Edward from marrying Mary of Burgundy, the heiress of Charles the Rash, he began to plot against his brother. An excuse was found, however, to impeach him ; he was imprisoned in the Tower on a charge of having worked against the king's life by magical arts, and very soon after it was announced that he was dead (1478).

The last act of the reign was an expedition against Scotland. James III. had expelled his brother, the Duke of Albany, and Gloucester was sent to restore him and to place him on the throne. The Scotch, however, offered a stout resistance, and, though Albany was allowed to regain his lands, the English army effected nothing but the recovery of Berwick. Edward died while planning an invasion of France to revenge himself on Louis, who had broken off the proposed marriage alliance, leaving two young sons, Edward and Richard, the elder of whom was at once proclaimed king, as Edward V. (1483).

The next three years are marked by a series of rapid changes, which culminated in the accession of the House of Tudor. The death of Edward IV. left four parties in England : the Lancastrians, who had still a few supporters ; the Woodville family ; the new nobility, which had been created by the Yorkists ; and the remnants of the old nobility, who were represented by the Dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham. Of these parties, the first was at present too weak to assert itself, and the first conflict was between the nobles, old and new, and the family of the queen mother. Gloucester utilised the general unpopularity of the Woodvilles to combine the

rest of England against them. Asserting his right, as first prince of the blood, to a predominant share in the government, he arrested Rivers and Grey and caused them to be imprisoned. Marching to London he persuaded the Council to declare him Protector, and then turned against the new nobility. The destruction of that party was accomplished by the execution of Hastings, while the two princes were lodged in the Tower. Having thus removed all his rivals, Gloucester proceeded to claim the crown. He asserted that he was the only legitimate son of Richard of York; a public sermon set forth his title and abilities, and, despite the absence of popular support, the Protector was proclaimed as Richard III.

The revolution excited little or no feeling. As a matter of fact, the country was already weary of constant internal strife, and Richard might have maintained his position had he not committed a serious blunder. At first, he displayed a very conciliatory spirit; Stanley, who had been a supporter of Hastings, was appointed Constable; the body of Henry VI. was given a decent burial at Windsor, and even Morton, Bishop of Ely, an energetic Lancastrian agitator, was left at large. He was well received on his progress through the kingdom, but it was in the midst of this progress that he made his great mistake. This was the assassination of his two nephews. There is little doubt now that they were murdered, and by his orders, although the strange career of Perkin Warbeck led many at a later date to believe that the younger prince had escaped. At the time, in any case, Richard was

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

KING RICHARD III. (1452–1485).

From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery.

regarded as having caused them to be put to death, and, even if he were innocent, the result remained the same. His popularity vanished; the Yorkists could tolerate his usurpation, but not this needless murder, and the death of Edward IV.'s sons left room for the Lancastrians to reassert themselves. And now the very measures by which the king had tried to conciliate his opponents contributed to his fall. Morton made use of his liberty to act as an intermediary between the Woodvilles and Richmond, who was put forward as the candidate for the throne, and it was through him that a compromise was reached which united the disaffected Yorkists and the Lancastrians. It was arranged that Elizabeth of York should marry Henry, and thus unite the claims of both houses. Soon afterwards Buckingham was won over to the new coalition. He found that, despite his services, he was rejected by Richard in favour of men of low birth, like Ratcliffe, Catesby, and Lovel, who are satirised in the doggerel of the time. Accordingly, he offered his support to Richmond, hoping, perhaps, to play the part of a second "Kingmaker."

But the plot was revealed to Richard, and he hastily collected his forces. Buckingham was prevented by floods from crossing the Severn, his army dispersed, and, being betrayed to the king, the duke was summarily executed (1483). Elsewhere the rebellion collapsed. The south had risen, but submitted as soon as the royal army appeared, and Richmond, though he reached Plymouth, was compelled to return to Brittany.

A wholesale confiscation of estates followed, and Richard filled the south with his devoted adherents from the north. All his efforts, indeed, were now directed to prepare for the attack which was certain to come. A truce with Scotland was concluded, a fleet and army raised, Richmond was obliged to leave Brittany and take refuge in France, and a marriage was proposed between the Prince of Wales and Elizabeth. But the opposition continued to grow in strength. Popular feeling turned against Richard, his position was weakened by the death of his son, and Charles VIII. openly supported the cause of Richmond. On the death of his wife the king even thought of marrying his niece, a desperate measure, which would have weakened Henry's cause, but the indignation which the report aroused compelled the abandonment of the idea. Still Richard resolved to make a supreme effort to save his throne, and, as soon as he heard that Richmond was about to sail, he encamped at Nottingham to be ready to strike in any direction. But the Stanleys, whom he had raised to high rank, were secretly traitors. When Richmond landed at Milford Haven he was speedily joined by Sir William Stanley, and the opportune desertion of Lord Stanley on the field of battle turned the scale against the king. Market Bosworth was the scene of the final struggle of the Wars of the Roses. Here the Lancastrians gained a decisive victory and Richard fell in the thick of the fight. With his death active resistance ended, and Richmond was acknowledged as Henry VII. (1485).

The character of Richard III. has been a subject for much discussion, and he has been generally regarded as a sort of monster. The physical deformity from which he suffered has been taken as the index of his mind, he has been considered as the murderer of Henry VI., of Edward, Prince of Wales, and of Clarence, as well as the instigator of many other crimes, including the assassination of the two princes in the Tower. But it is probable that his wickedness has been exaggerated. The only contemporary accounts of him were composed by partisans of Henry VII., who might be expected to blacken the character of the enemy of the reigning house. As a matter of fact, Edward IV. must be held as partly, if not wholly responsible for the earlier crimes attributed to Richard, and only the murder of his nephews can be said to have been entirely due to him. He was, at worst, an unscrupulous man in an age which did not recognise scruples, cruel when all were cruel, and, judged by the standard of his own time, not really a worse man than his contemporaries. Indeed, he was, in some ways, superior to most. He was loyal to Edward IV., when loyalty was a very rare virtue, he was a good son and father, he was an able ruler, and used his "ill-gotten" power well. Indeed, his chief fault was ambition, which led him to force his way to the throne, and there have been many worse men, and worse kings, than Richard III.

At first sight the Yorkist period may appear to have been merely the continuation of that which

immediately preceded it, but it was really a time of transition, a despotic interlude between the constitutional limited monarchy of the Lancastrians and the no less constitutional personal monarchy of the Tudors. During the reigns of Edward IV. and Richard III. Parliament was almost suspended; it was merely summoned to register the decisions of the Crown or to give a fictitious legality to its acts. And a combination of causes contributed to bring about this result. The destruction of the Baronage almost extinguished the Upper House, such peers as there were were the nominees of the king, bound to support the original of their own importance. At the same time the introduction of a restricted franchise, while it led to the members of the House of Commons being drawn from a better class, made it more easy for the Crown, or for the predominant party, to influence the elections. Packed Parliaments were, consequently, the rule rather than the exception at this time. And the failure of the Commons to cope with the disorder of the time led to popular indifference on the subject of Parliament. So long as there was a strong central government the mass of the people were satisfied. Moreover, the chief cause, which had led to the frequent and regular assembling of the estates, was removed. In the first year of his reign Edward IV. received the grant of tonnage and poundage and a tax on wool for his life, and was thus relieved, to a great extent, from the necessity of seeking financial aid from the Commons. His pension from Louis XI. made him still more

independent, and he further increased his resources by introducing "Benevolences"—nominally free gifts to the king by his subjects, really compulsory grants—and by his successful mercantile adventures. During his reign, therefore, Parliament rarely met, when it did so it was merely an assembly packed in the interests of the Government. The weakness of Richard III. compelled him to seek support from every available quarter, and he declared "Benevolences" to be illegal, but his career as a constitutional ruler was checked by the attacks of Richmond. On the whole, the Yorkist period marks the lowest point in the history of Parliament, its authority had disappeared, and there was no wish on the part of the people to see it restored.

And while the decline of the Commons contributed to the growth of the royal power, the other bodies, which tended to weaken the monarchy in times past, were brought into a position of dependence upon the king. The Baronage had been opposed to absolutism no less than to true popular liberty, they were, indeed, the enemies of all authority except their own. But in the French war and the subsequent civil strife they had been annihilated. The work which had been begun at Agincourt, and continued at Northampton and Towton, was completed at Barnet and Tewkesbury. Warwick and Buckingham were practically the last of the old barons, and the new nobility which arose under Edward IV. was by its very nature incapable of resisting the Crown. For it consisted of men, like the Stanleys or Howards, who had been raised

from obscurity by the royal favour alone and who depended for their importance upon a continuance of that favour. Without the prestige and influence of their predecessors, the new nobles were reduced to the position of mere satellites of the court. In other words, the destruction of the old feudal Baronage was completed in the Yorkist period. Henceforth, although there are great men in English history—great, that is, by reason of their wealth and the extent of their estates—there are no more "overmighty subjects," the greatest peer is insignificant when compared to the king, and the nobility cease to be capable of offering effective opposition to the Crown.

And in the case of the Church a very similar result was reached. It has been already pointed out that the Lancastrians had relied upon the clergy in no small degree, and that they had assisted in the suppression of heresy. It has further been mentioned that the triumph of the Church was rather apparent than real, that it had been gained at the expense of that popular confidence which had been the chief safeguard of its existence, and that, while all open opposition was crushed for a time, yet it was only the support of the monarchy which staved off the certain doom. During the Yorkist period the same evils which Wycliff had attacked prevailed in the Church. Vicious, wealthy, and worldly, the clergy forfeited the respect of the people, they were hated for their pride and envied for their riches, and fell more and more into disrepute. In order to preserve their posses-

sions they were obliged to show constant devotion to the Crown, and they were in no position to resume the task of championing popular liberty. And so, while Parliament was almost forgotten and the Baronage destroyed as a political force, the Church lost her independence, and there was no body left to resist the growing power of the Monarchy. In this way the Yorkist period forms a species of introduction to that of the Tudors; the era of personal government begins, during which the king, secure in the support of all classes, enjoys almost absolute power. And yet, however, the system was not perfected, and it was left for Henry VII. to complete the work of organisation.

While the power of the Monarchy was thus being established, the policy of the Yorkist kings contributed to assist the rise of that party which was destined eventually to overthrow the royal authority, to abolish personal government, and to restore the influence of Parliament. It has been seen that Edward IV. allied himself with Burgundy, but that, though he attacked France, he did not attempt the recovery of the old English possessions on the Continent. And these two decisions had momentous results. The first marked a return to the commercial policy of Edward III.; to that union with Flanders which had been the chief feature of English foreign policy in the past, but which had been neglected during the later Lancastrian period. And the second, the treaty of Pecquigny, indicated two things: firstly, that the alliance with Charles was essentially a commercial alliance,

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

LOUIS XI., KING OF FRANCE (1423–1483).

From a drawing in the British Museum.

and not intended to involve England in a continental war; and, secondly, that the schemes of Henry V. had been abandoned. It is true that Edward continued to hold the title of King of France and that the pension received from Louis XI. was termed tribute, but there was no real idea of asserting the claim of Edward III., save in the minds of a few reactionary visionaries. The future interference of England on the Continent was aimed at the maintenance of the balance of power. An attempt to conquer France was hardly more in the region of practical politics in the reign of Edward IV. than in that of George III. The ideas of modern foreign policy begin to appear, though as yet they are not fully expounded.

And with the abandonment of the reactionary policy of Henry V. commerce revived. The Yorkist kings gave great attention to trade, Edward IV. was himself a merchant and set an example of enterprise. At the same time some efforts were directed to restore the navy by the encouragement of shipbuilding, and an attempt was made to repress the prevalent piracy. From this date, also, the trade of England began to be conducted by Englishmen, instead of by Catalans, Genoese, and Hanseatic merchants. Attention was directed to the regulation of commerce. The export of gold was discouraged by the enactment of sumptuary laws and the establishment of the staple, and, although such measures were ill-advised, the adoption of that policy, which was ultimately elaborated into the mercantile system, shows an increased interest in

the welfare of English trade. Internally the gilds began to collapse in this period. Free competition was slowly established, and though it resulted in much immediate distress, it ultimately benefited the country by removing those artificial restrictions which had hampered industry. The cities which had escaped the calamities of the civil war grew richer and more important, while the people, released from the yoke of villeinage, improved their general condition. And, in short, the period was one of social progress; in it there was an advance on the part of that middle-class which at a much later date formed the backbone of the Puritan opposition to Charles I., and, while Edward IV. established an absolute monarchy in all but name and form, his foreign policy helped forward the eventual reaction.

But, while the support given to commercial enterprise was destined to lead to the restoration of liberty, there was another way in which Edward unconsciously assisted to undo his own work. He was the patron of Caxton, and thus contributed to the introduction into England of the most formidable of all the enemies of despotism—the art of printing. Assisted by royal favour, Caxton set up his press at Westminster, and thence poured forth his printed books upon the country. It is hardly necessary to dwell upon the importance of the new art. Whereas hitherto the manuscript works, laboriously transcribed by monks, had been almost, if not quite, unprocurable by the people at large, books now became comparatively common, and the clergy were no longer able

to control the public mind by preventing the circulation of such works as they did not approve. The introduction of printing was followed by a spread of profane literature. Men were no longer content with insipid hagiologies or the dull chronicles of the monks; they turned from them to the masterpieces of Rome. And presently the New Learning came to England also with that freedom of thought which was imbibed from the writings of classical authors and which led to the spiritual and political upheaval of the Reformation. Great is the debt of gratitude owed to Edward IV. as the patron of Caxton, as having protected, in its infancy, that art upon which liberty mainly rests.

Thus while the Yorkist period is characterised by a great advance in the royal power, it is also marked by considerable commercial progress and by a general raising of the middle class. And the end of Richard III.'s reign, since it is followed by a new system of government, affords an opportunity for considering the general results of the period of about a century and a quarter since the Black Death. That time was marked at first by rapid constitutional advance, culminating in the establishment of a limited monarchy under the Lancastrians. But then the weakness of the executive led to the outbreak of civil war, and in the general confusion Parliament appeared to lose all that it had gained. A strong personal monarchy followed, when the king attained to practically absolute power. But the new government adopted a commercial, in place of a continental, policy, and in accordance with the proposition, which has been

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

ELIZABETH OF YORK, QUEEN-CONSORT OF HENRY VII. (1465–1503).

From the effigy by Torregiano on the monument in Westminster Abbey.

already laid down, constitutional progress resulted from the decline of militarism; for though, at first sight, the Monarchy was supreme and unrivalled, yet there was really much popular influence, and signs were not wanting to show the ultimate course of events.

The essence of the new monarchy was that it was popular. The people were weary of a weak executive and welcomed the strong rule of Edward IV. But though the royal power was great, it was not great enough to despise popular feeling, and as time went on this became more and more true. Had the Yorkists entered upon foreign wars they might have laid the foundation of a permanent despotism, but their actual policy prevented this. For they created an opposition, or rather a party, which might eventually oppose them. When the Baronage and the Church were powerless to resist the Crown, the rise of the commercial classes saved England from a tyranny, and this rise was due to the foreign policy of the Yorkists, continued by the Tudors. In short, this period may be regarded as preparatory. In it those maxims of government were introduced which guided Henry VII. and his successors, and while it seems to be a time of unrestrained royal power, it is really the period in which the popular party gathered strength. Under the Tudors that party grows stronger and stronger, until the Monarchy ceases to be popular, when it no longer supports the Crown, but becomes an active opposition, and triumphs in the Puritan Revolution.

To sum up, the England of 1485 shows a marked

advance on the England of 1350. The feudal Monarchy has disappeared, the feudal Baronage has gone, and the feudal land system has almost passed away. The continental policy of the Plantagenets has been finally abandoned. The country is rapidly growing into a great commercial state, and with this growth the middle class rises. And though Parliament has declined in power and the Monarchy grown in strength, yet the basis of that Monarchy is popular, and its strength lies in the fact that it is needed to give that peace to the country which shall enable the people to consolidate their strength. The history of the next period is that of the gradual rise of a strong opposition, under the rule of a line of kings, who neglected their opportunity to destroy the liberties of the country.

VI

THE TUDOR MONARCHY

(1485–1529)

WITH the battle of Bosworth active resistance to the new king ended. The nation was anxious for peace, and in his slow progress from the Midlands to London Henry was everywhere applauded and welcomed as the saviour of society. In the universal joy his sternly repressive measures were overlooked or condoned. He was in no wise inclined to leave the hostile factions in peace. Edward, Earl of Warwick, the son of Clarence, who was the hope of one section of Yorkists, was sent to the Tower, and even the Princess Elizabeth was placed in safe keeping. Some degree of severity was, indeed, justified by the difficulties of Henry's position. In the first place, his title to the throne was uncertain; in the second, he knew well that the combination of parties which had given him his victory was the result rather of hatred for Richard III. than of affection for himself. He was obliged, therefore, to destroy the remains of the Yorkist party, and to secure the crown, before he con-

ciliated his opponents. And here he was met by a very serious problem; for while there were three grounds upon which he might base his claim to the throne, there were strong objections against resting upon any of them. In the first place, he might have asserted the right of conquest, but no one knew better than Henry himself that though he had defeated Richard, he had not reduced England, and that such a claim would have irritated the Yorkist section of his supporters. His second alternative was to marry Elizabeth and reign as her husband, but his pride shrank from owing his position to a woman, and, moreover, the claim of the Earl of Warwick was preferred by many to that of the daughter of Edward IV. Finally, he could pose as the representative of the Lancastrian claim. His connection with that family was remote. He traced his descent from John of Gaunt, through the Beauforts, the sons of Catherine Swynford, who had been legitimised under Richard II., but expressly excluded from the succession,[1] and consequently his hereditary title was at best shadowy, and actually non-existent. Eventually, however, after much deliberation, he decided upon a compromise, and, while adopting the Lancastrian claim as his principal title, he confused the issue by using the other alternatives as supports. From this decision there arose much trouble, and the internal disturbances which marked his reign were due in no small measure to the fact that Henry was nominally the champion of one party instead of being king of both.

[1] This exclusion was not legally valid.

For a time, however, he enjoyed a brief interval of peace. Five days after the battle of Bosworth he entered London in state, and the coronation, which was delayed by an outbreak of the sweating sickness, passed off in peace. In the granting of honours upon this occasion, Henry showed marked moderation. Only one new peer was created, for the king was resolved not to revive the Baronage by lavish generosity. At the same time, he caused all the Acts of the last reign to be declared void; he attainted his opponents as traitors, and confiscated their property, and he resumed the royal estates, which had been alienated during the civil war. Having thus taken measures to secure his throne, he redeemed the pledge given in exile and married Elizabeth of York in the following year, although he showed his jealousy of her superior title and his firm resolve not to rule by her means, by delaying her coronation until nearly twelve months later. Even then the performance of the ceremony was hastened by a revival of Yorkist activity and the appearance of Lambert Simnel.

The Yorkist party indeed, though temporarily crushed, was not extinguished, and was not prepared to submit quietly to the new government. It had two great sources of strength in Ireland and Burgundy. Since the reign of Richard II. the condition of the former country had been one of continual unrest, and the English authority in the island had been growing weaker and weaker During the Wars of the Roses it had formed a recruiting ground for the Yorkists, and the Lord

Deputy, the Earl of Kildare, was a zealous supporter of that party. And, since the royal power did not reach much beyond the ports, Ireland afforded an excellent base of operations for any attack upon Henry. At the same time, it would not have been easy to organise a rebellion there, and so Burgundy was even more valuable to the malcontents. It has been seen that Edward IV. had entered into alliance with that duchy, and his sister, the Duchess Dowager Margaret, was possessed of great influence in the Low Countries, and also ruler of her dower lands in complete independence. She was bitterly opposed to the Lancastrians, and only too ready to assist in any attempt to overthrow Henry. Possessed of very considerable wealth, she was able to fit out expeditions for this purpose, while her power was equal to the protection of refugees. It was in Burgundy, therefore, that the Yorkist plots were hatched, their armaments prepared, and a safe retreat found in case of defeat. In England itself the malcontents were, perhaps, not very important; the strength of the party lay in the late ministers of Richard III., in the irreconcilable supporters of the house of York, and in those men who considered themselves as having been slighted by the new king, or as not having been adequately rewarded. The mass of the people was inclined to be apathetic, and, if it were necessary to take sides, was more likely to support the reigning monarch than his opponents.

With so many enemies round him it could not be expected that Henry would long be left in peace, and,

actually, the first rising against him took place very shortly after his marriage. While he was making a progress through Yorkshire in order to reconcile the northern counties, he learnt that a plot had been arranged to kidnap him. Its organisers were Lord Lovel (the favourite of the late king), and the two Staffords (relatives of the Duke of Buckingham). They succeeded in gathering some troops together, and the Staffords besieged Worcester, but the energetic measures of the king caused the collapse of the rebellion. Lovel fled to Burgundy, where several Yorkists had already taken refuge, while Henry caused the elder Stafford to be hanged, and pardoned the younger (1486).

But though this attempt had been so easily crushed, the malcontents did not despair, and with the help of Margaret they organised a much more formidable rising. The Earl of Warwick was put forward as the legitimate heir, but as it was feared that an open rebellion in his favour would merely cause Henry to put him to death, it was resolved to find some one to impersonate him. By these means the life of the earl would be secured by the king's own interest while in event of success the pretender could be easily removed. The Yorkists found the necessary instrument ready to hand. For some obscure reason a priest, Richard Simon, had induced a boy to pretend that he was Richard, Duke of York, the younger brother of Edward V. This was Lambert Simnel, who was born of humble parents at Oxford but had received a better education than the ordinary. The exiles had little difficulty in persuading Simnel

to change his *rôle*, and he was presently sent to Ireland, where Kildare at once acknowledged him as the Earl of Warwick, and caused him to be crowned at Dublin. An Irish army was collected for the invasion of England, and was soon joined by Lovel, John de la Pole (Earl of Lincoln), and Martin Schwarz, with a body of German mercenaries and a small Yorkist contingent.

With the forces thus raised the rebels crossed to Lancashire, but they found that the people would give them no help. The king had paraded Warwick through the streets of London in order to discredit the impostor, and this tended to confirm the waverers in their allegiance. It was in vain that the Yorkists marched across England, when they encountered the royal army at Stoke-upon-Trent, they had not received any considerable accession of strength. The battle which followed proved decisive. Schwarz and his mercenaries were exterminated; the Irish gave way before the disciplined troops of the king; Lincoln was killed; the rebel army was dispersed, and Simnel was taken prisoner (1487). Lovel escaped from the field, but was heard of no more; probably the skeleton found three hundred years later in a secret room at Minster Lovel was his, and he met his death from starvation. Henry adopted strong measures to punish the authors of the rising, and another series of confiscations took place, which served to complete the destruction of the Yorkist party in England. To Simnel he showed contemptuous mercy; he was made a scullion in the royal kitchen, and was afterwards cupbearer.

The end of this rebellion was followed by four years of internal peace, during which Henry consolidated his power, but there then arose another impostor, far more dangerous than the first. Simnel appears to have been merely a tool, but Perkin Warbeck was possessed of considerable talent, and gained credence all over Europe. There is now little doubt that he was merely the son of a tanner of Tournay, but the evidence is so clearly that of partial witnesses that even at the present day there are some who believe that he was, as he claimed to be, Richard, Duke of York. And so it is not surprising that at a time when the fate of the two princes was shrouded in mystery, and in an age when the critical faculty was not yet developed, the story told by Warbeck should have been readily accepted. He made his first appearance at Cork, but fearing arrest at the hands of Henry's partisans, he soon retired to Burgundy.[1] Here, it is said, he met Margaret accidentally, and was at once greeted by her as Richard, Duke of York; and though this story is probably untrue, its existence shows that there must have been a considerable degree of resemblance between the pretender and the prince. In any case he was well received, and was acknowledged as King of England, and the influence of the duchess procured him a similar acknowledgment from her relative, Maximilian, King of the Romans. The outbreak of war between Henry VII. and France induced Charles VIII. to invite him to Paris, where

[1] There is some doubt as to whether Warbeck's first visit to Burgundy was before or after his visit to Paris.

Perkin warbeck nasit de Tournay supposé pour Richard
Duc. d'Yorck second fils d'Edouard IV. roy d'Angleterre l'an 149:
fut porté à Londres sur la fin de l'an 1499

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

PERKIN WARBECK (1474–1499).

From a drawing by a French or Flemish artist of the sixteenth century, preserved at Arras, France.

he received a cordial welcome (1492); was recognised as "Richard IV. of England," and promised help for the recovery of his throne. Before any expedition, however, had been actually fitted out, the Treaty of Étaples was concluded, and in accordance with one of its provisions Warweck was expelled from the French dominions. He returned to Burgundy, and began to negotiate with the disaffected nobles in England; but at the moment when everything seemed to be ready for a rebellion, Henry intercepted his correspondence. As a result the English ringleaders were executed, among them Sir William Stanley, who had again changed sides, and the survivors were awed into submission. When soon afterwards the pretender effected a landing on the coast of Kent, the local forces proved equal to the task of repelling him (1495). He sailed away to Ireland, but met with no more success, failing in an attack on Waterford, and being unable to excite a popular outbreak, and in all respects his fortunes appeared to be declining, when a new friend came forward to help him.

This friend was James IV. of Scotland, who was then on bad terms with Henry. Probably because he thought that the pretender might prove a useful instrument in his hands, he invited Warbeck to his court, and acknowledged his title to the English throne. But he went further than had the other foreign supporters of the impostor, and by giving him Lady Katherine Gordon in marriage, almost appeared to prove that he really believed him to be the Duke of York. For the bride was a near relation

to the royal house of Scotland and a lady of great beauty; and if James were not really serious in his support of Warbeck, he at least spared no pains to convince others that he was. After the marriage had been celebrated with almost regal splendour, Warbeck was placed in command of an army, and sent to attack Northern England (1496). But hatred of the Scotch prevailed over affection for the Yorkist house; not a man joined the invaders, and the expedition ended in complete failure. And though the pretender continued to reside for a time at Edinburgh, the zeal of James abated when he saw that the chance of Warbeck's ultimate success was small, and he probably hastened, if he did not compel, his departure to Ireland. Here he met with no more support than before, and he eagerly embraced the opportunity which offered itself, for him to make a last attempt in a new quarter.

This was in Cornwall, which had risen against Henry, owing to the oppressive taxation of the king at the very time when Warbeck was attacking the northern counties. Led at first by a lawyer and a furrier, the rebels marched eastwards, and were joined by Lord Audley. Under his command they pressed on towards London and entered Kent, where they tried in vain to collect some reinforcements. But meanwhile the king had recalled his forces from the north, and was able to surround the Cornishmen at Blackheath, and to compel them to surrender (1497). The three leaders were put to death, while the others were pardoned and sent home. Warbeck had heard in Scotland of the rising in the West, and

he entertained hopes that the same men might be induced to rebel again if a leader appeared among them. Accordingly he landed in Cornwall with a small force, and was joined by some three thousand men. With this army he made a demonstration before Exeter, but that city was too strongly held for him to take it. Devonshire rose against him, and Warbeck, after moving upon Taunton, suddenly deserted his followers, and took sanctuary at Beaulieu Abbey. His army quietly dispersed, and his career as a pretender was over (1497). Hitherto he had sustained his part with considerable credit, but now he devoted all his attention to escaping the scaffold. On receiving a promise that his life should be spared, he publicly confessed his imposture, gave himself up to Henry, and was imprisoned in the Tower. Here he met the Earl of Warwick, with whom he formed a close friendship, but after about a year's imprisonment he was accused of attempting to escape, and both he and his fellow prisoner were executed (1499). It is possible that the alleged plot was merely put forward by Henry as an excuse for him to do what he had already intended, and that the real reason for the execution of the two was the king's desire to satisfy Ferdinand of Spain, who was unwilling to complete the pending negotiations for a marriage alliance until all danger of a revolution in England had been removed. In any case, the death of Warwick destroyed the last hopes of the Yorkists. Edmund de la Pole, the representative of that party, fled to Burgundy, and no further outbreak disturbed the tranquility of the house of Tudor during Henry's

reign. Of Warbeck it may be said that no imposture in history has been more skilfully maintained. During the six years of his career he did not once make a slip which could reveal his true identity, and, as has been said, there are still a few who even now hold that the fact of his imposture is non-proven. The evidence of his birth was obtained admittedly by means of agents employed by the king, and thus open to grave suspicion on the score of partiality, while the confession made by Warbeck himself was extorted by the fear of death.[1]

While he was engaged in defending himself against these two pretenders, Henry was at the same time doing all in his power to secure his position by measures of internal reform. Suspending detailed criticism upon his policy for the present, it is necessary to sketch its chief features here, and it may be premised that it was all directed to render rebellion unlikely, if not quite impossible, or to secure that, in event of a rising, the advantage should lie, as far as might be, with the existing government. His security was endangered by the obvious weakness of his hereditary title, by the possibility of a revival of the Baronage, and by the low state of his treasury, and the primary object of his government was to remove these dangers. His first measure was intended to induce the country to accept his rule by protecting those who served him from the probable results of a revolution. This was the purpose of his statute, which declared that it is lawful in every

[1] One theory, which seems to merit more attention than it has received, suggests that he was an illegitimate son of Edward IV.

case to support the *de facto* king, and which freed those who did so from the penalties of high treason (1495). It must be added that the adherents of Richard III. at Bosworth were specially excepted from the benefits of the new law by means of an outrageous legal fiction, Henry's reign being dated from the day before the battle. The natural tendency of this statute was to discourage hasty rebellion, since it was obviously wiser to watch the course of events than to join either party, or, if this course were impossible, to support the reigning king.

But Henry was not content with the mere holding out of inducements to obedience; he also took measures to compel it. It has been already pointed out that the practice of "maintenance" enabled powerful offenders to escape justice, and rendered them practically independent on their own estates. To meet this evil that court, which is commonly known as the Star Chamber, was established (1487). It consisted of the most influential members of the Privy Council, and was in the first instance given jurisdiction in all cases where the local courts were unlikely to be able to give a free verdict. In the course of time it extended its sphere, and absorbed the functions of the original Star Chamber of Edward III.,[1] whence it acquired the name under which it became notorious as one of the chief engines of Stuart tyranny. During the reign of Henry VII., however, it did an excellent work in abolishing a practice which had hitherto been one of the chief

[1] A committee of the Royal Council, having jurisdiction in all matters outside the province of the Court of Chancery.

sources of strength to a turbulent Baronage, and in thus contributing to the preservation of law and order. And at the some time Henry strictly enforced the laws against "Liveries." It was the practice of the great men to keep a number of dependents who wore the badge of their lord, supported him in every case, and were fed in his hall. They formed an army ready to hand, and their existence had been invaluable to the barons in the civil wars. Richard III. had declared the granting of "Liveries" to be illegal, and his policy in this respect was adopted and vigorously pursued by his successor. Finally, he limited the rights of Sanctuary, and restricted the privilege of Benefit of Clergy, and indirectly assisted the dispersion of great estates by the Statute of Fines (1488). All these measures were intended to prevent the nobles from acquiring the position which had been occupied by their predecessors.

For the transgression of any of his statutes the same punishment, a heavy fine, was generally inflicted, and from the very outset of his reign Henry began to accumulate that vast wealth with which his name is associated in the popular imagination. His desire for money was insatiable. As has been seen, he resumed many of the royal estates and confiscated the property of the Yorkists. In addition, he exacted to the uttermost all his feudal dues; his taxation was uniformly heavy and caused two brief rebellions, that in Cornwall, already mentioned, and another in the north, which was less serious, and he resorted to the unpopular "Benevolences" in connection with which

Cardinal Morton used his "fork with two prongs." When it was possible to inflict a fine, not even his most faithful supporters were permitted to escape, and excuses for inflicting such punishments were found in season and out of season. A body of informers arose and flourished—pettifogging lawyers, whose sole merit was their ingenuity in discovering breaches of the law. Even his foreign policy was subordinated to his lust for gold. By these means Henry became the richest ruler in Europe, and consequently one of the most powerful, since the development of military science had caused money to be much more needed in time of war. But his wealth also gave him an overwhelming advantage in any contest with his opponents at home, and enabled him to give to England that internal peace which she so sorely needed.

It was a more difficult task to secure a like tranquility to Ireland, and yet it was most necessary to do so; for, as has been seen, the neighbouring island afforded an excellent base of operations for any Yorkist attack upon England, and so long as it was in disorder the preservation of the newly-won peace at home was very nearly impossible. At the beginning of his reign Henry found that the royal authority in Ireland was restricted to the Pale—that is, the district in the immediate neighbourhood of Dublin—and to a few ports, such as Waterford and Cork. Within these limits the Irish were regarded as natural enemies and were liable to be killed at sight without penalty; without them, the country was practically independent. The descendants of the

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

MARGARET TUDOR, QUEEN-CONSORT OF SCOTLAND (1489–1541).

From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery.

original Norman colonists had "turned Irish," adopting the native dress and even changing their names, in some cases, to Irish sounding titles, like Bourke for De Burgh. Secure in their castles, which were fortified by art and protected by nature, these Irish-English were a perpetual source of disorder, and engaged in a constant border warfare with the men of the Pale. Moreover, owing to the neglect which Ireland had experienced since the visit of Richard II., the real authority over the English settlements was disputed between the two rival houses of FitzGerald and Butler. The head of the first family was the Earl of Kildare, a vehement supporter of the Yorkist cause, who had secured the office of Lord Deputy. In opposition to him was the head of the second family, the Earl of Ormond, an equally zealous partisan of the Lancastrians, whose influence, however, had declined owing to the triumph of the House of York. Kildare terrorised Dublin from his castle of Maynooth, and though he was clearly implicated in the rebellion of Lambert Simnel, his position was so strong that Henry did not dare to attempt to punish him. Even when he was able to summon him to England to answer certain charges against him, the king had to submit to the familiar "thou" from the earl, and to treat him with marked consideration. "All Ireland cannot rule Kildare," complained one of the courtiers. "Then Kildare must rule all Ireland," replied Henry; and, as a matter of fact, he subsequently did appoint the earl as his Viceroy. But it was as Viceroy of a new Ireland. The king's second son, afterwards Henry VIII., was

appointed Lieutenant after the collapse of Simnel's rebellion, and Sir Edward Poynings, an energetic and capable administrator, was sent with the Prince, as his deputy. By his vigorous measures he made the royal authority felt ; he induced Kildare, as well as Ormond, to serve under him ; and, in the Parliament of Drogheda, he secured the enactment of two measures calculated to repress disorder in the future. These formed, together, the famous "Poynings' Law," which rendered Ireland absolutely dependent on the Royal Council (1495). By the first, no Parliament might be held until the English authorities had assented to its summons and approved of the measures, which it was proposed to bring forward in it. By the second, all the laws then in force in England were declared to be binding in Ireland also. In other words, the independence of the Irish Parliament was destroyed and all power of initiative taken from it, while the administration of justice was assimilated to that in England. The success of the new system was exemplified by the failure of Warbeck to secure support in Ireland, and, although much still remained to be done, Henry deserves credit for having effected a certain pacification of the country. Even the turbulent Kildare became a loyal subject, and the authority of the English Crown was displayed in distant Connaught. The royal power was raised to the highest point it had yet reached.

While repulsing the attacks of pretenders and restoring order in England and in Ireland, Henry was also engaged in important transactions with foreign powers. To understand his continental

policy it is necessary to review the state of Europe at the time of his accession, where the balance of power had been changed and old states had been developed, or new states created, in the last few years. It has been seen already that Edward IV. abandoned Burgundy at the Treaty of Pecquigny, and left Louis XI. to complete the consolidation of France in peace. In that work he had been very successful, and Brittany alone, of all the semi-independent fiefs, remained unabsorbed. The inheritance of Charles the Rash had, at the same time, been partitioned between France, which secured Burgundy proper, and the Hapsburgs, to whose dominions the Low Countries had been united by the marriage of Mary, the heiress of the last Burgundian duke, to Maximilian, King of the Romans. The son of this union, the Archduke Philip, was in nominal possession of the country comprised in the present Holland and Belgium, but he was a minor, and the regency was exercised by his father and by the Dowager Duchess Margaret. Meanwhile, the Holy Roman Empire, after its temporary revival under Sigismund, had sunk into a state of deplorable weakness. Frederic III. was intent only upon the aggrandisement of his family, and the Imperial authority was reduced to the nominal leadership of a miscellaneous collection of independent, and occasionally hostile, states. In Italy this was the age of "tyrants"—Ludovico Sforza ruled in Milan, Lorenzo de Medici in Florence, while Naples was in the hands of the house of Aragon. Genoa was declining, and was practically controlled by Sforza; Venice, now at

the height of her power, was engaged in the task of preventing a Turkish conquest of Italy, which had been a pressing danger three years before, when the Ottomans occupied Otranto. The Papacy had been freed from the Great Schism, but the Popes were worldly and vicious; they had lost the spiritual ascendancy which they had formerly enjoyed, and were embarking upon schemes for the increase of their temporal power and the exaltation of their families. At present, complete religious unity prevailed, but the growth of Learning, the revival of Literature, and the great devotion to the study of classical authors, foreshadowed the approaching upheaval. Already the dogmas of the Church were disregarded, and the writings of contemporary Italians display a tendency toward agnosticism, if not towards paganism. But, at the same time, a new and powerful Christian state was arising in the south-west. The marriage of Ferdinand to Isabella had united the two kingdoms of Aragon and Castile, and the "Catholic Sovereigns" were making great progress towards the reduction of Granada, the last stronghold of the Moors, and of the Prophet, in Western Europe. That city was the final bar to the complete unification of Spain, and it was clear that, when its conquest was completed, the kingdom would be a new and important factor in the European relations.

Henry was drawn into the vortex of continental politics at the very outset of his reign. Louis XI. had been succeeded by Charles VIII., the primary object of whose policy was the completion of the

work begun by his father, by the absorption of Brittany. He was favoured in his attempt by the condition of that duchy, for Francis II., the former protector of the Lancastrian exiles, was now old, and his only child was a daughter, Anne. And the French were soon given a pretext for aggression. Brittany unwisely assisted the rebel Louis, Duke of Orleans, against Charles, and when the revolt was crushed the armies of France poured into the duchy and captured town after town. In England, the success of the French was viewed with comparative indifference. Traditional friendship, or a feeling of gallantry, induced a few volunteers to cross the Channel with Lord Woodville, but even the almost total annihilation of this force at the battle of St. Aubin, did not rouse the people (1488). Henry was averse to war, being naturally of a peaceful disposition, and being also hampered by the unrest of England and the insecurity of his throne. The Bretons were compelled to conclude a disadvantageous peace with France, and soon afterwards Duke Francis died, leaving his daughter, who was only twelve years old, to maintain the independence of her country.

But now Henry found a good reason for interfering in the affairs of the duchy, even at the risk of a war with France. He was above all things anxious to secure his dynasty, and in no way could he do this more readily than by uniting his family with one of the other royal houses of Europe. He selected the new Spanish kingdom as the most satisfactory ally, and began to negotiate with Ferdinand for a

marriage between his youthful son, Arthur, and a princess of Castile. But the King of Spain demanded an adequate return for his consent to such an alliance; the price fixed was the recovery of Roussillon and Cerdagne from France; and, in order to secure this, Henry agreed to occupy the attention of Charles by a vigorous opposition to the absorption of Brittany. Thus it was that he took an active part in the defence of the duchy.

It was now all important to find a husband for Anne who should be able to render her effectual assistance. Of the many suitors who appeared the chief were Maximilian, King of the Romans, and the Sieur d'Albret, a nobleman with great local influence, while Charles proposed to settle the question by marrying the young duchess himself. Henry, after first putting forward the Duke of Buckingham, gave his support to another candidate, Don Juan of Spain; but the only result of the negotiations was to cause internal disorder and to help on the French, who again invaded Brittany. The Sieur d'Albret deserted to Charles; the English gave but little assistance, and Anne made one last effort to preserve her independence by marrying Maximilian by proxy (1490). But the impecunious King of the Romans could give his wife no help; Henry and Ferdinand were not prepared to fight for him; and when Charles entered the duchy in person Anne gave way. Abandoned by all her allies, she repudiated her half-marriage and became the wife of the French king, who thus gained a complete triumph. The last of the great fiefs was thus united with the Crown of France (1491).

But Henry could not allow the whole question to be settled in this way. Some time before he had been entrusted with certain towns in Brittany as a guarantee for the pay of such troops as he might dispatch for the defence of the duchy, and he was unwilling to surrender them without compensation. At the same time, he was obliged to act alone. Ferdinand, with whom he had, as has been seen, concluded an alliance, was concerned only with the reduction of Granada, and the recovery of Roussillon and Cerdagne. Maximilian was occupied with the defence of his hereditary dominions. Against his own wish and against the inclinations of his subjects, therefore, Henry was compelled to attack France. With a great show of determination and with loud professions of his intention of conquering "his kingdom of France," he crossed the Channel and laid siege to Boulogne. But the war was soon ended, and a treaty was concluded on very much the same terms as that of Pecquigny. By the peace of Étaples Henry received a large sum of money under the pretext that it formed the arrears of Edward IV.'s pension and covered the expenses of the war; while he abandoned his allies, and Charles disowned Warbeck. The English king gained his objects—compensation for past expenses and security against pretenders, and the union of Brittany with France was no longer opposed by England (1493).

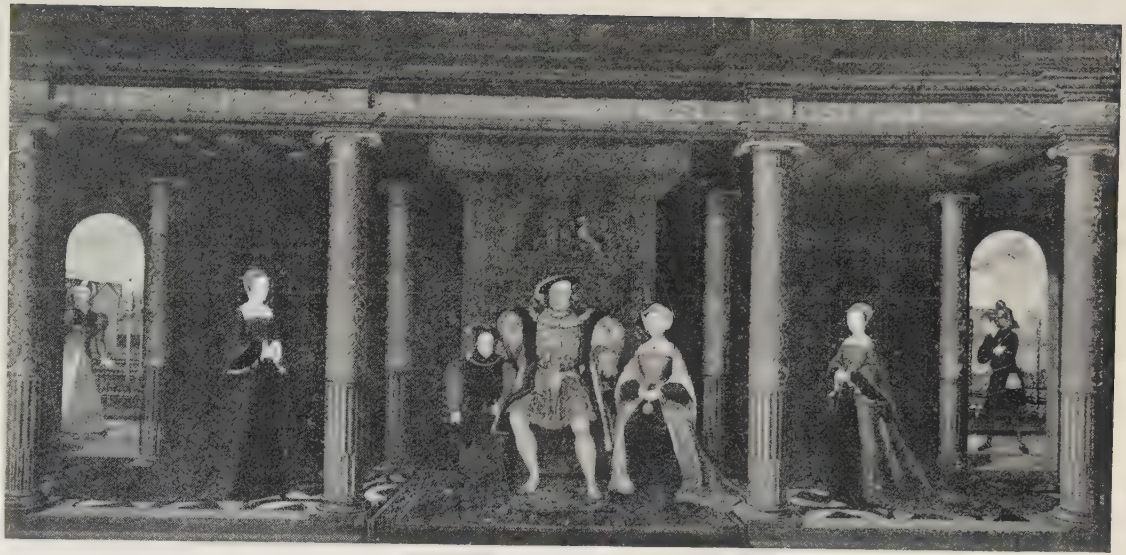
Apart from this brief war, Henry's foreign policy proceeded on entirely peaceful lines, such military operations as there were being directed against the pretenders. It was by diplomacy that he prevented

the three countries hostile to him from injuring him. At the very beginning of his reign he had proposed a marriage treaty to James III., but the assassination of that king put an abrupt end to the negotiations. With James IV. Henry's relations were for a time very strained, and, as has been seen, Warbeck found a refuge and a valuable ally in Scotland. But the capture of the pretender led to a renewal of friendly intercourse between Edinburgh and London, the Spanish ambassador using all his influence to promote peace. A treaty was concluded after some delay, and was presently cemented by the marriage of James IV. to Margaret, the elder daughter of the English king (1502). The immediate object of this alliance was probably only to secure peace, but it led just one hundred years later to the union of the two crowns. At the time of the marriage it is said that one of Henry's advisers suggested that it might lead to the accession of a Scotch king to the throne of England, and that the king answered that "The greater will draw the lesser"—a prophecy which, if really spoken, was amply fulfilled in the reign of James I. At present, however, the only result of the marriage was an unwonted peace between England and Scotland, which endured for about ten years.

The other enemies to Henry's peace were Burgundy and France, but the course of events upon the Continent enabled the English king to secure himself against them with very much greater ease. After the Treaty of Étaples, Charles VIII. made use of his newly-acquired peace at home to engage in the first of those Italian expeditions, which formed the most

prominent feature in French foreign policy for the next fifty years. His rapid and brilliant success in the peninsula, culminating in his occupation of Naples, little more than six months after his departure from Lyons, alarmed both Ferdinand and Maximilian, now Emperor, as well as the Italian states. They formed the "Holy Alliance" (1494), in conjunction with the Pope, Venice, and Milan, to expel the invaders from the peninsula. But it was of vital importance to the allies that Henry should not assist Charles, and Ferdinand tried every means to induce England to join the league, or at least to remain neutral. But to all the arguments of the Catholic king and of his special envoy, the penurious Dr. Puebla, the English monarch objected that Burgundy was hostile to him, and that Warbeck continued to find an asylum in Flanders. Ferdinand, therefore, brought pressure to bear upon the Emperor to induce him to abandon the pretender and the conclusion of the "Intercursus Magnus," coupled with the continued progress of the French, eventually induced Maximilian to agree to do this. In return, Henry entered the "Holy Alliance," but at the same time he was careful not to bind himself in any way to make war upon Charles, so that his adhesion to the league was little more in effect than a declaration of neutrality.

The premature death of the French king restored peace to Europe, and led to a renewal of friendly relations between England and France. Henry turned his attention to the negotiation of matrimonial alliances. The last years of the fifteenth



THE FAMILY OF HENRY VIII. (1491–1547).

From a painting in the Queen's Audience Chamber, Hampton Court.

and the first years of the sixteenth century were characterised by the great attention paid to royal marriages. The two fortunate alliances, which afterwards resulted in the world-empire of Charles V., had made a great impression on the minds of men, who saw that by them Spain and the Empire, as well as the hereditary dominions of the Hapsburgs, would in all probability pass to one man, and that by the mere accident of birth, the son of Philip and Joanna would become the ruler of half Europe. And so Henry VII. endeavoured during the latter part of his reign to form marriage connections which should unite England with this coming power. With Ferdinand he negotiated a treaty whereby Arthur, Prince of Wales, married Katherine of Spain 1501. The young husband died within a year of the wedding, and a serious quarrel occurred between the two kings. Ferdinand demanded that the dowry should be refunded; Henry claimed the balance due, and in order to secure the money, even proposed to marry his daughter-in-law, while he revenged himself upon her father by keeping her in a condition of the utmost poverty. Eventually, an agreement was arranged, and a papal dispensation was obtained to enable Katherine to marry her brother-in-law, Henry, Duke of York. This marriage, which was destined to have most important results, was not actually celebrated until after the king's death.

Meanwhile the death of Elizabeth of York took place, and Henry availed himself of his freedom to seek eagerly for a second wife. An accident, of which he took a somewhat unscrupulous ad-

vantage, enabled him to conclude an eminently satisfactory treaty. On his way to Spain from Flanders, the Archduke Philip, now King of Castile in right of his wife, Isabella having died, was wrecked near Weymouth, and the English king at once summoned him to London. Here he was received with great show of courtesy, but he was given to understand that he would not be allowed to leave the country until he had agreed to make an adequate return for Henry's "hospitality." Accordingly, a treaty was signed by which Philip, in addition to granting great commercial advantages to England, and surrendering Edmund de la Pole, agreed to a double marriage alliance. His sister, Margaret of Savoy, was to become the wife of Henry himself, while the young Archduke Charles, the future emperor, should marry Mary, second daughter of the English king (1504). Of these two matches, the latter was concluded by proxy, but never advanced further, while the former was presently abandoned altogether. For Philip died not long afterwards, and Henry thought that it would be more to his advantage to marry Joanna. An embassy was actually sent to Spain, though the lady was hopelessly mad, but its report was unfavourable, and negotiations were again proceeding in reference to Margaret of Savoy, when the king of England died at the early age of fifty-two. He had enjoyed, on the whole, a very successful reign, and though he does not altogether deserve the panegyric written on him by Bacon, yet he was undoubtedly possessed of great abilities. An opportunist he certainly was, but his

measures were destined to redound to the advantage of his country, and to inaugurate an era of hitherto undreamt-of prosperity.

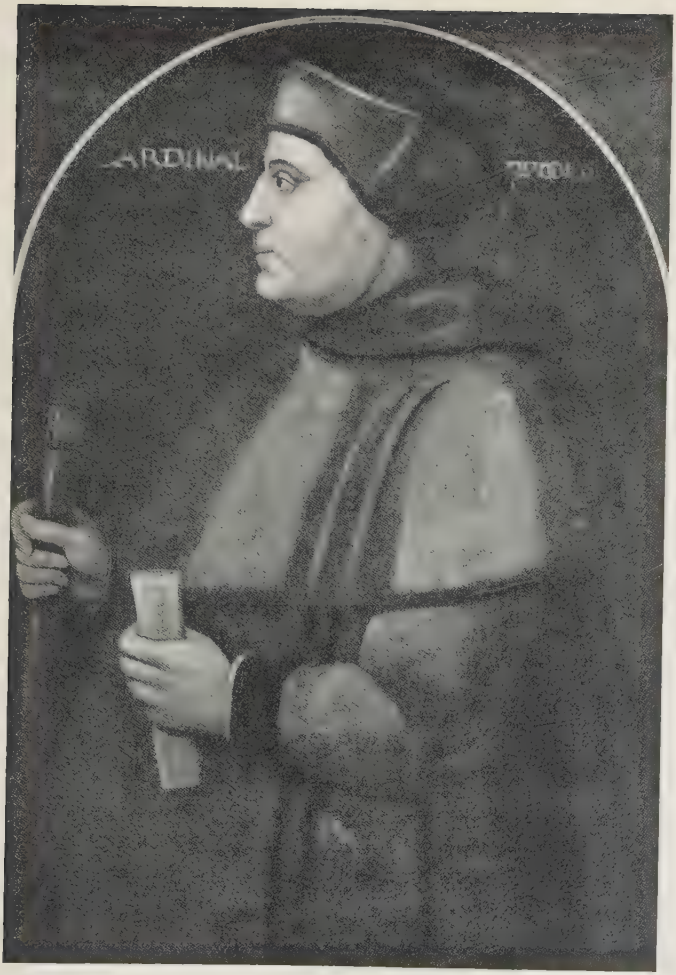
Henry VIII. succeeded to the throne under most favourable circumstances. He was young, handsome, accomplished, and personally popular, while the wealth, carefully collected by his father, enabled him for a time to be extravagant and generous without having recourse to extra taxation. His title was secure, since the most serious rivals of the Tudor dynasty had been executed, and the surviving De la Poles were exiles on the Continent. In short, he came into the enjoyment of the fruits of his predecessor's work, without inheriting the unpopularity, which the completion of that work had fastened upon Henry VII. He was, therefore, able to engage in schemes which would have been impossible for his father, and to enter upon the fascinating game of European politics without dreading that even a slight mistake might cost him his throne. As a result, there is a certain light-heartedness, a certain lack of consistency in his relations with foreign states, which makes the early part of his reign, during which these foreign relations were the chief concern of the government, peculiar in English history. Henry is depicted as "bluff King Hal," a jovial tyrant, and to a certain extent his reign bears out this estimate of his character. He fights and makes peace and fights again, all with a total disregard for any sort of principle, with a bland inconsequence which is almost attractive, acting as though war were a pleasant game, and as though it did not matter which side he

took. And the constant vacillation of his policy cannot be altogether attributed to the dark scheming of his great minister, for Wolsey had one end in view, and, had he been quite supreme, might have attained it. But as a matter of fact, he was not quite supreme; and his master was not prepared to forward his designs, or to adopt any settled course, until the attractive face of Anne Boleyn made the divorce for some time the aim and end of all his actions at home and abroad.

It is owing to this lack of a settled purpose in the royal policy that the earlier part of the reign of Henry VIII. derives its chief importance from the fact that it saw the rise and fall of the last of the great ecclesiastical politicians. Thomas Wolsey, Archbishop of York, Bishop of Durham, Chancellor, Cardinal, and Legate of the Holy See, affords one of the most striking of many examples of the essentially democratic character of the mediæval church—democratic, that is, in the possibility which she offered to the poorest and meanest of her sons, of rising to be the friend of kings and the peer of the noblest of the land. Born of humble parents, he rose with incredible rapidity to a position of incontestable superiority. The private chaplain of Henry VII. became in twelve years the second personage in the realm. Endowed with vast wealth as the result of his public employments, and pensioned moreover by the rival monarchs who sought to gain his influence on their behalf, he lived in a style of unparalleled magnificence, and, though his pride and ostentation offended his would-be equals, they appealed powerfully to the people, whom they impressed.

Unlike his master, Wolsey had a clear and reasonable policy. He aimed at the exaltation of his country, and he realised the value of a "Balance of Power" in assisting him to gain this end. It was his primary object to maintain the peace of Europe under the guarantee of England, while, if a war broke out, it was his wish to prevent the complete triumph of either of the two great rival states of the Continent. In the pursuance of this policy he was handicapped by the character of Henry and by the nature of his own position. The king was at once obstinate and capricious, while Wolsey knew well that for him to lose the royal favour would be equivalent to the signature of his own death-warrant. The policy of England during the years of his supremacy was occasionally dictated by him, but his designs were crossed or modified by the inconstant character of the king.

It was an appeal to his pride, a hint that his influence would be the deciding factor, that first brought Henry into the arena of continental politics, and on this occasion he was one of the members of the "Holy League." The formation of that alliance was the outcome of the aggression of Louis XII. and the patriotism of Julius II. The conquests of Charles VIII. had been lost as rapidly as they had been won, but this did not deter his successor from resuming the attempt to unite Naples with the French crown. Beginning by conquering the duchy of Milan, which he claimed in right of his descent from the Visconti at the battle of Novara, he next concluded the Treaty of Granada with Ferdinand the Catholic,



Photo] *[Emery Walker*

CARDINAL WOLSEY (? 1475–1530).

From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery.

and in conjunction with Spain conquered the kingdom of Naples. A quarrel between the allies resulted in the expulsion of the French from the south, and led Louis to entertain the proposal of the Papacy to partition the continental possessions of Venice, as he hoped in this way to consolidate his power in the north, and forward eventually his designs against Ferdinand. The aggression of the Republic, which had not spared the patrimony of St. Peter, formed the pretext for the war, and her wealth induced the Emperor and Spain, as well as France and Julius, to unite against her in the League of Cambray (1508). The Venetians bowed before the storm, and sacrificed the larger part of their possessions on the mainland, but the triumph of the allies was the undoing of Louis. Elated by the success of his first plan, the Pope began to form a fresh combination with the object of expelling the French from Italy. Into his "Holy League" he quickly succeeded in drawing Venice and the Swiss, and after hostilities had begun he received a further accession of strength by the adhesion of Maximilian and Ferdinand (1511). In order to create a diversion which should divide the French forces, he next applied to Henry, and easily persuaded the English king to attack France on the west.

The actual military operations of the war which followed were not of great importance. Relying upon Ferdinand's promise of support, an army was despatched to Southern France, where it was utilised by the wily Spaniard in the furtherance of his own designs upon Navarre. But after a while the English

were disgusted by the selfishness of their ally; sickness broke out, and the expedition soon returned home, exhausted and disheartened. In the following year Henry invaded Artois in person and laid siege to Therouenne. An attempt at relief ended in an easy victory for the besiegers at Guinegate, the French cavalry being seized with an unreasonable panic and dispersing so rapidly that the engagement was known as the "Battle of the Spurs" (1513). The town shortly afterwards surrendered, and the capture of the more important city of Tournay followed. But the "Holy League" had accomplished its work in Italy; the allies made peace independently, and a treaty was soon concluded between France and England. Louis paid Henry a large sum, which was due according to the former arrangements between the two countries, and married Mary, the younger sister of the English king. This marriage proved very unfortunate for the bridegroom; he was induced to gratify his young wife by indulging in a round of gaieties, to which he had not been accustomed, and the violent change in his habits led to his death within six months (1515). His widow hastened to follow her own inclinations and found a second husband in Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, her former lover, by whom she became the ancestress of the unhappy Lady Jane Grey. Henry was, for a time, very angry, but Mary was his favourite sister, and he pardoned her after a short delay.

Meanwhile England had been engaged also in a

war with Scotland. James IV., who had already many grounds of complaint against his brother-in-law, was induced by Louis to avail himself of the absence of Henry in France to cross the border. But the Earl of Surrey proved equal to the task of defeating this invasion. He attacked the Scotch at Flodden and gained a completely decisive victory: the king, together with the larger part of his nobility, fell on the field, and the military force of Scotland was almost annihilated (1513). The crown passed to James V., who was a minor, and the regency was entrusted to the queen-mother, Margaret, owing to the earnest desire of the Scotch for peace with England. But her imprudent marriage to Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, made the regent very unpopular; the Duke of Albany returned from France and took over the leadership of the disaffected nobles, and a state of anarchy prevailed for some years. The French gave considerable support to Albany, but their efforts were successfully foiled by Lord Dacre, and after a stormy period of some ten years Margaret and Angus triumphed. As a result peace subsisted between the two countries for eighteen years, until the influence of Mary of Guise led her husband, James V., to renew hostilities with England at the close of Henry's reign.

On the continent of Europe the accession of Francis I. was the signal for the outbreak of a fresh war in Italy. By his brilliant victory at Marignano he secured the duchy of Milan (1515), and, on the death of Ferdinand the Catholic, the difficulties of his successor, the Archduke Charles, led to a brief truce.

But this was merely the preliminary to a greater storm. The two young kings both became candidates for the Imperial dignity when Maximilian died shortly afterwards. Henry also put himself forward, but the English envoys soon saw that he had no chance of election and were easily persuaded to use their influence in favour of Charles. Supported by England and by the Elector of Saxony, the King of Spain was chosen, and thus acquired, in addition to his previous possessions, all the prestige and all the vague authority which belonged to the title of Emperor (1519). In regard to the extent of his dominions, hereditary and Imperial, he became the most powerful monarch that Europe had ever seen—at least since the days of his illustrious namesake. From his father he inherited the Low Countries and the Hapsburg territories; from his mother, Spain, Naples, and Sicily, while as emperor he had a claim upon the services of the princes of Germany and an ill-defined suzerainty over Italy. Moreover, the discoveries of Columbus had placed the unexplored riches of a New World at the disposal of the sovereign of Spain. But Charles had one formidable rival in Francis, who, by reason of the superior organisation and far greater centralisation of his state, was able to contend on equal terms with the ruler of half Christendom. A conflict between the Emperor and France was inevitable, and, in view of it, both sovereigns eagerly sought the alliance of England.

At first the interests of Francis appeared likely to succeed, but Charles paid a hurried visit to London,

and by his address secured the support of Wolsey, now at the height of his power. Though Henry crossed to France and had the famous interview of the "Field of Cloth of Gold" with the French king, an alliance was shortly afterwards concluded with the Emperor, by which England engaged to support him if attacked (1520). In forming this league Henry was actuated by a variety of motives; he was influenced by his relationship to the Emperor, whose uncle by marriage he was; by his wish to emulate the exploits of Edward III. and Henry V. in France; and by his jealousy of the reputation of Francis for knightly prowess and gallantry. In addition there was the traditional friendship between England and the Empire, the old rivalry between England and France, the commercial connection with Flanders, and the recent alliance with Spain, all of which contributed to bring about the same result. And, finally, the superior political ability of Charles, which gave him an ascendancy over the mind of his uncle, must not be ignored; it enabled him to succeed not only at this time, but even when he had openly broken his promises and flouted Henry's wishes in the matter of the divorce in retaining that English alliance which was so useful to him with little break.

The value of this connection to the Emperor was, however, negative rather than positive; it served rather to distract the attention of Francis and divide his forces than to provide Charles with active help, and the military operations of the English were in no wise commensurate with the power and reputation of Henry. Two expeditions were, it is true, despatched

to France, but they accomplished nothing noteworthy. In the case of the second the promises of the Constable Bourbon seemed to hold out a possibility of great success, but before they could be fulfilled the treason of the duke was discovered, and he was obliged to take refuge with the Imperial army without the men whom he had undertaken to bring over with him. Meanwhile the ability of Pescara had crowned the arms of the Emperor with triumph, and now he reached the culminating point of his success in the defeat and capture of Francis at Pavia (1525). But the rapid progress of the Imperialists alarmed the rest of Europe; men began to fear that Charles would make himself dictator of the world and revive the obsolete jurisdiction of the Empire. Henry discovered that his ally was bent upon furthering his own cause and that he was not prepared to sacrifice his own interests for the benefit of his ally. And a coolness thus arose between Charles and England, which was already threatening the stability of the alliance, when the sack of Rome and the harsh treatment of the Pope sent a shock through the whole of Christendom. The English king immediately entered into negotiations with Francis; a strict alliance was concluded between the two monarchs, and in the following year England declared war against the Emperor, though there were no active operations.

Indeed, another matter was already occupying the attention of the king, which, while it contributed to continue the hostility between him and Charles, effectually prevented him from indulging in military exploits. This matter was the question of the legality

of his marriage. Henry had never liked Katherine, who was devoid of personal beauty and also considerably older than her husband. He had been disappointed in his hope of an heir, and the premature death of several children had, perhaps, alarmed his naturally superstitious mind. Moreover, the question of the succession was really pressing. The Princess Mary, the king's only child, was delicate, and in event of her death there would almost certainly be a dispute between the various members of the royal house and a danger of a revival of the Yorkist party. At the time of the quarrel with Charles the question of a divorce was raised privately, and Wolsey, though he was not given the king's full confidence, was instructed to find means by which the marriage might be dissolved. Henry, however, did not tell his minister that he had fallen in love with Anne Boleyn, a beautiful maid of honour; or, if the Cardinal knew this, he did not know that his master proposed to raise her to the position of queen.

An appeal was therefore addressed to the Pope, asking him to sanction a divorce on the ground that the bull of Julius II. was invalid. But Clement VII. was not in a position to act freely, even if he could consistently meet Henry's wishes. Katherine was the Emperor's aunt, and Charles let it be clearly understood that he would not abandon her. The recent sack of Rome had impressed the Pope with the strength of the Imperial power, and there was also a danger that if he were annoyed the Emperor would refrain from opposing, or perhaps even support, the Reformation movement, which was making rapid

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

ANNE BOLEYN (1507–1536).

From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery.

progress in Germany. At the same time Clement was equally unwilling to alienate Henry, who had so recently appeared as the champion of the Church against Luther, and, to increase the difficulty of his position, it was contrary to all the traditions of the Papacy to revoke a decision once given. He sought, therefore, to take refuge in a policy of procrastination and to make a show of wishing to settle the case, while actually suspending his judgment in the hope that events might occur which should free him from his present embarrassment. With these objects in view he despatched Cardinal Campeggio to England, and the trial of Katherine's case opened before him and Wolsey (1528). But just as it seemed possible that a decision would be reached Clement suddenly found an excuse to annul the whole proceedings and ordered that a new trial should be opened at Rome. This was regarded by Henry as equivalent to an adverse decision, and from that moment the quarrel with the Papacy and the Reformation in England really began. At present, however, the chief result was the fall of Wolsey.

The great minister had encouraged the king to hope for a favourable verdict, and the abortive result of the investigation was laid to his charge. Henry had already grown tired of the Cardinal, and he eagerly took the opportunity of ridding himself of an adviser who had ceased to please. Anne Boleyn, too, hated Wolsey, because she knew that he was not in favour of her exaltation to the throne, and her influence was now paramount. The Cardinal fell as

rapidly as he had risen, the Great Seal was taken from him within three months after Campeggio's departure, his wealth was confiscated, and he was on his way to London to answer a series of charges under the Statute of *Praemunire*, when he died at Leicester. His death marks the close of the first period of Henry's reign and the committal of England to a course of hostility to Rome. As has been said, he was the last of those great ecclesiastical statesmen who figure so largely in the history of England, and he was in some ways the greatest. His tireless industry, his grasp of affairs, his appreciation of the changed character of the times, stamp him as a man of great ability, but it must be remembered that he was a determined enemy to political liberty, and, while desiring a moral reformation of the Church, a vigorous opponent of freedom of thought in religious matters. His fall was an advantage to the country, as enabling it at last to deliver itself from the tyranny of dogma.

In the period which closed with the fall of this great man, the central feature was clearly the vast increase of the royal power. After the turmoil of the Wars of the Roses there was an universal desire for peace, and peace at any price, and this could only be satisfied by the establishment of a strong executive. The vigorous rule of the Tudors exactly suited the needs of the time, and, delighted with the new-found rest, the people appeared to grow careless of those ancient liberties which had been so dearly bought. Consequently the government of England seemed to have been changed; the king

seemed to rule without restraint and Parliament to exist merely to register the decrees of its master. But, as a matter of fact, the so-called "Tudor despotism" has no existence in reality. The essence of despotic government is the absence of a constitution—that is, of any recognised limitations to the authority of the ruler and of any body having the power to say, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." Such unfettered power was acquired about this time by the sovereigns of France and Spain, who, having triumphed over their nobility, proceeded to ruin the free institutions of their respective countries. But in England, though the course of events was similar up to a certain point, there was subsequently a wide divergence, and there is a most remarkable contrast between the policy of the Tudors and that of their contemporaries on the Continent. Both Henry VII. and his son ruled with a strong hand, but they did not assault the liberties of their subjects, and the very fact that their most illegal acts were formally sanctioned by Parliament shows that they recognised the rights of that body and the true basis of their own authority. In short, though the monarchy was exalted, the government of England remained, in the words of Judge Fortescue, "not only regal, but political," and did not degenerate into that "unnatural" system—a tyranny.

The very circumstances, which contributed to this growth of the royal power, led ultimately to the triumph of the popular party; for the chief obstacles to the establishment of a strong executive had been

THE EMPEROR CHARLES V. (1500-1558).

From an engraving after Sir Anthony Van Dyke.

the Baronage and the Church, who were also enemies to all true liberty, however much it might suit them, from time to time, to stand forth as champions of the people. As has been already pointed out, the old Baronage had been practically exterminated in the Wars of the Roses and had been replaced by a new nobility, created by the triumphant Yorkists and owing its importance to the royal favour. Henry VII. appreciated the fact that the great families had been the chief source of disorder in the past, and that they would be the most dangerous supporters of any rebellion, and, as has been seen, his legislation was directed to destroy such as survived and to prevent the new nobility from acquiring a similar position to that enjoyed by their predecessors. His purpose was, to a certain extent, accomplished by the constant fines and confiscations, which mark his earlier years; by the stern repression of the practices of Livery and Maintenance; by the paucity of his new creations; and by the facilities, which he afforded, for the disintegration of large estates. At the same time, he was careful to employ churchmen or men of middle rank as his chief advisers. Cardinal Morton, a devoted Lancastrian, was Chancellor during the greater part of his reign; while prominent in his council were Empson and Dudley, men of low birth, whose fame depends upon their skill in finding excuses for exacting money. They were the heads of an efficient secret service, which had been founded by Edward IV. and which developed into a formidable support of the royal power under the fostering care of the Tudors. But it was the possession of

great wealth which rendered the king capable of meeting the most formidable baronial rising with assurance of success. The Lancastrians had suffered from their extreme poverty, and Edward IV. had set the example of accumulating money. Henry VII., however, amassed a hoard, in comparison with which the resources of his predecessors shrink into insignificance. And, at the same time, riches had become more and more the true source of success in government, for the art of war had undergone considerable modifications. Even before the Wars of the Roses, cannon had played an important part in sieges; while the later battles of the civil war had been won by the armies which had the best artillery. And, as a natural result, the old type of military force became extinct. It was necessary to have men skilled in the use of the new weapons, and such skill, being only obtainable through long practice, was only found in the ranks of the professional soldiers. Hence, wealth was more essential than before, when any collection of men formed a passable army; and Henry, by accumulating money, was in a position to buy the means of quelling any rebellion. At the same time, he did not keep any permanent military force in his employ, and thus did not secure the chief weapon which was used on the Continent for the establishment of despotism. Henry VIII. followed out his father's policy. He continued to select his ministers from the Church; his first Chancellor was Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his second Cardinal Wolsey. And though he dissipated the wealth which had been so arduously collected, and

executed Empson and Dudley, he maintained the position acquired by Henry VII., and the fact that he was able to secure the condemnation and death of the Duke of Buckingham, without difficulty and without a protest, shows how completely even the most powerful noble was at his mercy. Henry VII. established the strong monarchy; his son consolidated it in his earlier years; and together they created that form of government which subsisted until the accession of the House of Stuart.

But there were limitations upon the power of the Tudor monarchs. Without the assistance of a standing army, they had not the means of successfully defying their subjects, and, moreover, the weakness of their title to the throne forced them to adopt a popular attitude, especially in the reign of Henry VII. They, consequently, did not attempt the destruction of Parliament, and, though that body appears as the ready instrument of the Crown, yet the very fact that it was used prevented it from losing all weight. It even dared, upon one subject, to resist the government, and opposed successfully the exorbitant demands of Wolsey in the matter of taxation. The Cardinal went in person to the House of Commons and required the immediate voting of £800,000 for the war with France, but the Speaker, Sir Thomas More, protested that the members were overawed by the presence of so great a man and induced him to withdraw. Thereupon, a protest was registered against the intrusion of Wolsey, and the Commons were with difficulty induced to vote about half the original sum, the payment to be spread over

four years (1523). Even then the opposition was so strong that a member expressed his doubts as to whether it would not cost the king "the goodwills and true herts of his subjects, . . . a ferre grettir treasure for a king than gold or silver." A subsequent attempt to exact a forced loan was resisted throughout the country. It was openly asserted that the levying of taxes without consent of Parliament was illegal, and the proposal was dropped in favour of a Benevolence, the legality of which was upheld by the judges on the ground that the practice had only been forbidden during the reign of an usurper. These two incidents show that the spirit of liberty was dormant, but not dead; that, when the strong monarchy ceased to be necessary, it would probably also cease to exist; that the power of the Tudors mainly depended for its durability upon the popularity of the reigning monarch; and, in short, that there was a limit which the Crown would transgress at its peril.

It has been already pointed out that the Church at this time was reduced to a condition of dependence on the Crown, and that she relied upon the royal authority to prevent the confiscation of her wealth, as she had lost both the affection and respect of the people. That dependence was now all the more marked and all the more real, since the New Learning had spread to England also, bringing with it an increased distrust of the established religion and a tendency to question the dogmas, which had hitherto been received with implicit faith. To Grocyn belongs the honour of being the first to lecture upon Greek at Oxford; that is, upon the old authors, whose manu-

scripts had been so recently re-introduced into Europe, for there had long been a certain amount of study of Aristotle and the language of Athens had never been totally neglected. He was followed by Linacre and Colet at the same University; but the light shone weakly until the accession of Henry VIII. The new king was an enthusiastic patron of scholars, and with his countenance the New Learning made rapid strides. Erasmus, who had been somewhat coldly treated by Henry VII., returned to England and for a time occupied the newly founded chair of Greek at Cambridge. Colet, now Dean of St. Paul's, revolutionised education by the foundation of St. Paul's School; and seven years after the accession of Henry VIII., Sir Thomas More, one of the most accomplished of all the Renaissance scholars, published the "Utopia"—the chief monument of the New Learning in England (1515). Under the guise of an account of an imaginary republic, he pointed out the abuses of the time in Church and State, advocating toleration, increased education, and greater distribution of wealth. He denounced the idleness of the rich and preached the dignity of labour, insisting that the object of legislation should be to benefit the many, rather than the few, and propounding ideals, which have not been realised even at the present day. Indeed, throughout the "Utopia" there is a spirit of liberalism, far in advance of the time at which it was written, but bound to influence men's minds, if only by its daring originality.

With the pure learning, not only the king but also Wolsey and most of the leading ecclesiastics had

SIR THOMAS MORE (1478–1535).

From an old engraving after the enamel by Holbein.

much sympathy; but with the theological speculations, which resulted from it, they had none. A year after the publication of More's immortal work, Martin Luther entered his famous protest against the abuses of the Roman court, and began the Reformation on the Continent. Favoured by several of the princes of the Empire, and protected by the Elector of Saxony, the great reformer grew more and more independent; passing from an attack upon the vices, to an assault upon the doctrines, of the Church. Having burned the papal bull which condemned him as a heretic, he defied the assembled dignitaries of the Empire at the diet of Worms, and thenceforward his doctrines spread with enormous rapidity, while from his retreat at Wartburg he poured forth his tracts and directed the course of the movement which he had begun. Such a complete revolution, which seemed destined to destroy the whole fabric of the existing Church, naturally aroused much attention in England. The doctrines of Wycliff, which had been almost forgotten, had already been revived, and a carefully organised society, "The Association of Christian Brothers," spread them among the people. Ever since the accession of Henry VIII., prosecutions for heresy had been frequent, and Colet himself had narrowly escaped condemnation; while the abuses of the ecclesiastical courts had been fearlessly exposed, not without some signs of royal approval. And now the doctrines of Luther began to take hold upon the people; and as they were bolder and clearer the movement became more formidable. But it was regarded with alarmed disapproval by the governing

class and by the nobles, lay and spiritual. Henry, who was proud of his theological attainments, published, early in the controversy, his "Assertio Septem Sacramentorum adversus Martinum Lutherum" (1521), which provoked a somewhat scurrilous reply from the Reformer, and which led Leo X. to grant to his royal supporter the title of "Defender of the Faith." More's attachment to the beliefs of his childhood proved greater than his affection for toleration, and he, too, joined in the opposition to the "new heresy." But one man alone seems to have fully appreciated the true meaning of the Reformation and to have realised the danger with which the Church was brought face to face. Wolsey, though at one with the king in his adherence to the old faith, saw that unless there could be some improvement in the moral condition of the clergy from within, that improvement would come from without, and the anger aroused by the vices of individuals would lead to the destruction of the institution. And, indeed, the corruption of that institution was so great as almost to warrant its abolition. The vicious example of such Popes as the infamous Alexander VI. had been all too faithfully followed by the subordinate clergy, and in most cases the best that could be said of the spiritual rulers of England was that they were too much occupied in politics to be immoral. So notorious was the condition of many of the religious houses, that Cardinal Morton had obtained a bull authorising a limited measure of suppression, and he was obliged to roundly rebuke one abbot for his scandalous con-

duct. Wolsey resolved to attempt to improve the condition of the Church. He ordered an investigation and, as a result, diverted the revenues of some of the smaller monasteries to more useful purposes, founding, for example, his Cardinal's College at Oxford largely from the moneys thus obtained. Even his desire for the Papacy may be partially attributed to his wish to use the immense power, which still belonged to the Pope, for the purification of the Church. But his reforms were ineffective and his fall cut short his work. The result of his labours was but slight, and possibly only led to increased attention being paid to the existing abuses and so to the hastening on of the Reformation.

Meanwhile the class to which the "new religion" more especially appealed had been growing in strength and, despite the existence of much distress, the general condition of the people continued to improve. The period was one of an agrarian revolution. England was gradually abandoning tillage in favour of the more lucrative employment of sheep farming. And this change naturally involved much immediate misery; for the care of the large flocks could be undertaken by one or two men, where formerly many had been required to plough and sow and reap. In addition, the fierce competition, which thus arose, was intensified by the immigration of numbers of aliens, who were so hated that many riots resulted in various parts of the country. And the distress was not confined to the rural districts. The older towns suffered from the rise of new centres of industry; villages, like Birmingham, began to grow

into important places, since the traders left their houses and settled elsewhere in order to avoid the tyranny of the gilds. And upon all fell the heavy taxation of the Tudors, which, though ultimately beneficial in that it made the preservation of order possible, was a great evil at the time. But there was much good as well as much bad in the state of the country. The gradual breaking up of the craft gilds, which steadily continued, encouraged manufacturers by freeing them from the artificial restrictions under which they had previously laboured, and a flourishing export trade in cloth with Germany arose during this period. Still more beneficial was the increased interest in commerce displayed by the government. As has been seen, the Yorkist kings encouraged trade and the Tudors followed their example. Edward IV. was a merchant prince, Henry VII. enrolled himself in the livery company of the Merchant Taylors, and the royal countenance thus given to commerce tended to lead to greater attention being paid to it by their subjects. Even the final adoption of the Mercantile System was not altogether harmful at that time. A rising industry does, perhaps, require some measure of protection, and though the Navigation Laws, which insisted upon confining trade to native traders, were subsequently wholly baneful in their effect, they probably served at the time to encourage English shipbuilding and English commerce. Alien competition is most excellent when once the native industry has been established ; but there is a danger that it may kill it in its infancy. In their foreign policy, also, the Tudors both consciously and un-

consciously favoured the growth of commerce. By their treaties and alliances they secured great advantages for English trade, and the profitable connection with Flanders was made more profitable by the "Intercursus Magnus" and "Intercursus Malus" under Henry VII., and by the union with Charles V., under his successor. And the continued abstention from military expeditions, at least on any large scale, furthered the interests of the commercial classes.

But more than anything else, the great discoveries of the closing years of the fifteenth century gave a tremendous impetus to commerce and to mercantile enterprise. Vasco da Gama and Columbus opened up new trade routes and penetrated to strange lands, which had hitherto been regarded as existing merely in the minds of dreamers. And while, in very truth, a "New World" was added to the Old, the art of navigation was revolutionised. Mariners ceased to creep along by the coast; they boldly pushed out into the ocean and braved the dangers of the deep with a new courage. This was the result of the exploits of the great navigators, who were the first to trust implicitly to the guidance of the compass. And now there arose in England a class of merchant adventurers, the prototypes of the Elizabethan seamen, who made long voyages, and extended the field of English trade beyond its old limits of the Baltic on the one hand, and the Levant on the other. Before long there arose also the great Chartered Companies, to which the foundation of the Colonial Empire may most properly be traced.

To commercial success there was, however, one

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

THE "GREAT HARRY."

From a drawing by J. Allen, after Holbein's picture.

great obstacle—the prevalence of piracy. It has already been seen that the Yorkist kings attempted its suppression, and one clause in the "Intercursus Magnus" was directed to the same object. But the only way in which the evil could be really met was by an increase in the naval power of England, and so it was that the Tudors in their zeal for commerce turned their attention to the formation of a strong fleet. Since the time of Edward III. the history of the English navy had been little more than a shameful record of weakness and inefficiency. There were few ships, either belonging to the government, or capable of being used, and such as there were but poorly constructed. With Henry VII., however, a better state of things began, and that king fully deserves the title of "Father of the English Navy." Since his own subjects were deplorably ignorant of the art of shipbuilding, he imported Genoese workmen to instruct them, and by their labour the famous "Great Harry," the first real English warship, was constructed, which was the model ship for fifty years, and marks an epoch in the history of naval architecture in England. In all he collected a fleet of fifty-seven vessels, and thus established the nucleus of the present Royal Navy. As yet, the advance was not great; for, until the time of Henry VIII., arrows were the principal missiles used, and, though cannon were common abroad, they were used by the English mainly "to terrify the enemy with the noise and smoke." Henry VIII. continued his father's work and added more ships to the fleet, causing a second "Great Harry" and the ill-fated "Mary

Rose" to be built. Henceforward, indeed, England was never without a navy, and the encouragement afforded to shipbuilding led to a great increase in the number and to a great improvement in the quality of English ships.

And while such measures, by encouraging commerce, enriched the middle class, and consequently increased its importance, the care with which the Tudors revived and fostered the local courts contributed in no small measure to organise the future popular party and to fit it for the coming struggle. It is most important to realise that the true basis of national liberty is local freedom. Local government preceded Parliament, and the assembly of estates was merely in reality the concentration of shire-moots. When local free institutions flourish, there is general liberty and Parliament is strong; the prosperity of the head depends upon that of the members. During the civil war the machinery of local government had declined; but under the Tudors it was revived and made better by stricter organisation. This work, which was not the least important undertaken by the sovereigns of this period, was begun under Henry VII. and steadily progressed until its completion by Elizabeth. And thus the so-called despotism had a great and indeed the chief share in forming that party which was to furnish the opposition to the Stuarts and defeat the attempt to found an absolute monarchy. By the time of the fall of Wolsey the establishment of good order had been accomplished by the strengthening of the executive, and the attention of England had been directed

finally to the pursuit of commerce. In the following periods it will be seen how a great religious movement spread over the country and led to a truer freedom than had ever been known before, and how as a result of this England attained to a higher position among the nations of the world, and, seeking an outlet for her new-found energy, entered upon that career of colonial expansion which continues to the present day.

VII

THE REFORMATION

(1529–1558)

WITH the fall of Wolsey the Reformation in England really began. The king was still absorbed in his desire for a divorce, and it was clear that he would ultimately break with the Papacy upon this point, since he had already abandoned a minister whom he had trusted for so long to the vengeance of Anne Boleyn, and since nothing could be more certain than that the Pope would not give way. And there arose two parties—the "Conservatives," who clung to the old idea of a united Christendom, and were anxious to maintain at least a spiritual, if not a political, connection with Rome; and the Reformers, who were themselves divided into the supporters of Luther, and the more moderate section who shrank from the violent breach which German Protestantism necessitated. Henry himself was not yet convinced of the logical conclusion of his own quarrel with Clement, as is shown by his appointment of Sir Thomas More, the leader of the "Conservatives," to

the Chancellorship vacated by Wolsey; but the ingenuity of Cranmer presently led to the triumph of the opposite party. That churchman suggested that after all the Pope was not competent to decide the question of the divorce, and that the matter properly fell within the jurisdiction of a general council only, or, failing this, should be referred to the Universities of Europe. The latter course was adopted, and eventually resulted in an open verdict. But as Henry was able to say that the unfavourable opinions had been given from fear of the Emperor, the desired object was gained, and Cranmer, now archbishop, was able to pronounce a divorce. Meanwhile the famous "Reformation Parliament" (1529-1536) had assembled, and the work of destroying the union with Rome was progressing rapidly.

For though Henry had found a way out of his difficulty, he was by no means reconciled with the Pope. He was possibly anxious to revenge himself upon Clement, but it is more likely that his earlier anti-Papal measures were intended to terrify the court of Rome into submission. It was only when all hopes of an accommodation had disappeared that he finally severed the connection between England and the Papacy, and it is possible that even then he was carried further than he had intended to go by his new chief minister, Thomas Cromwell. That able, if unscrupulous, man had been in the service of Wolsey and had attracted the king's notice by the courage with which he stood by his master in the hour of his distress. After the final fall of the Cardinal he was taken into the royal service, where his capacity for

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

THOMAS CROMWELL, EARL OF ESSEX (? 1485-1540).

From a painting (of the school of Holbein) in the National Portrait Gallery.

business and his industry soon led to his promotion. He was really responsible for the Acts of the Reformation Parliament, or at least for such of them as were especially in the direction of absolute severance from Rome and the adoption or toleration of Lutheran doctrines. In the initial measures of that assembly men of all parties were able to take part, for the first session was devoted to a reform of those great ecclesiastical abuses which were reprobated even by the most conservative. The excessive fees charged by the Church courts, which had the sole jurisdiction in probate and matrimonial law, were reduced: the clergy were forbidden to engage in trade, and the practices of non-residence and of pluralities were checked by absolute prohibition. But the following six years, during which the same Parliament continued, saw the attack upon clergy and Pope alike grow in strength. The second session was marked by that most extraordinary perversion of the constitution, the pardon of the whole realm by act of parliament for its breach of the statute of *Praemunire* by its recognition of the legatine authority of Wolsey. The clergy were heavily fined and compelled to recognise the king as the supreme head of the Church, though at present permitted to salve their consciences with the restrictive clause, "so far as the law of Christ will allow." The laity were included in the pardon, at the desire of the Commons, who feared that otherwise they might be called upon to purchase a similar forgiveness at a later date, and so, not only was the undoubted prerogative of the king—the dispensing power—apparently thought insufficient

for such an occasion, but the nation, through its representatives, pronounced its own absolution for a breach of the law—a thing absolutely without parallel in the history of this or any other country.

The fear, which seems to have been instilled into the minds of the clergy by the fact that they had been forced to obtain such a pardon enabled the more advanced party to proceed more rapidly. In quick succession a series of blows was dealt to Papal authority. The Pope was deprived of the first-fruits of benefices, which were subsequently annexed to the Crown; appeals to Rome were prohibited; the ecclesiastical courts were brought under royal control by the Act of Submission of the Clergy, by which the enforcement of canons was made dependent upon the assent of the king; the nomination of bishops was entrusted to the Crown by the institution of the *congé d'élire*; the payment of Peter's pence was abolished; and, finally, the Royal Succession Act was passed. This in effect completed the separation from Rome; for the oath required under it necessitated an admission that the marriage with Anne Boleyn was valid, and thus tacitly denied the papal power of dispensation. In the following session the Act of Supremacy declared Henry to be the supreme head of the Church and omitted the previous saving clause, while during the next year the Pope replied with a bull of deposition, maintaining the legitimacy of the marriage with Katherine, which had been already declared; and the Commons, as a result of Cromwell's commission of inquiry, dissolved the smaller monasteries, the larger houses sharing the same fate four years afterwards.

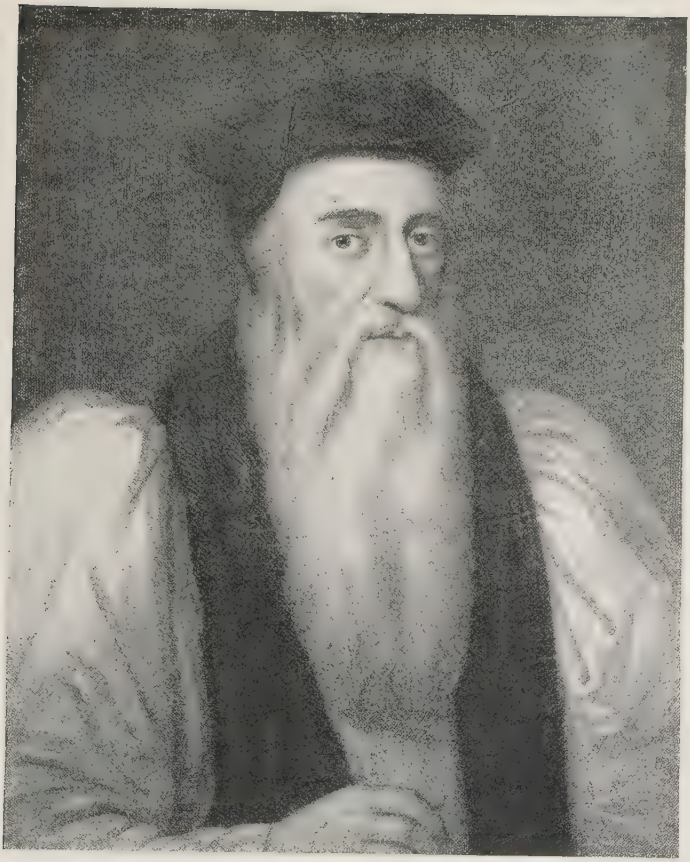
Into a detailed discussion of the justice or injustice of this last measure it is not possible to enter here, but a few tentative remarks upon it are necessary. It may be premised that the issue has been somewhat obscured by those writers who have regarded it as a violation of the rights of property since it is obviously permissible for Parliament to confiscate even private possessions for the good of the state, and much more so to apply the revenues of a corporate body, which has ceased to do good work, to some other public purpose. The real question is whether the monasteries were or were not still valuable to the nation at large. It may be regarded as certain that the report of the commission of inquiry exaggerated the vices and follies of the monks, though it did not invent them, but it is none the less true that the time for the abolition of monastic institutions as they then existed had come. In the dark ages the patient toil of the cloister, however misdirected at times, had served to keep the lamp of learning alight, and humanity owes a very real debt to the mediæval monks, but now the bright day of the Renaissance had dawned, and the work of the monasteries had ceased to be necessary or even beneficial to mankind. A vast amount of wealth was devoted to the maintenance of a proportionately small number of men in comparative idleness; their very charity tended to pauperise and to encourage the growing class of "sturdy beggars," and their learning was to a great extent obsolete and futile. Upon these grounds it will be recognised by impartial minds that the dissolution of the monasteries was justifiable, while, at

the same time, it may be regretted that many valuable specimens of mediæval architecture perished, and that the confiscated wealth was not all applied to a more useful purpose than the enriching of the king and his favourites.[1]

The rapid progress of reform had not been due to the entire sympathy of the nation. On the contrary, there had been very considerable opposition, formed by the union of the remnants of the Yorkist party and the more extreme supporters of the old *régime*. The ravings of an epileptic serving-maid were converted into prophecies, uttered under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by the zeal of the clergy, and the Nun of Kent, as she was styled, became the centre of a great conspiracy, until Cromwell caused her to be executed (1534). More respectable victims were soon sacrificed. Fisher, the learned and kindly Bishop of Rochester, who had been imprisoned on the ground of his complicity in the recent plot, and Sir Thomas More, suffered death, as the result of their refusal to take the oath required by the Act of Supremacy, while the monks of the Charter-house were arrested and many of them executed for the same reason (1535). After this, insurrections, either really or professedly in favour of the old Church, broke out in various parts of Henry's dominions. But the value of the strong monarchy was exemplified, and the vigorous measures of the

[1] It is true that some part of the confiscated wealth was otherwise employed. Six new bishoprics were founded and some colleges received larger endowments; but, generally speaking, the property was either retained by Henry or distributed among his courtiers.

king soon quelled all resistance. Ireland, which had been in its normal state of unrest since the accession of Henry, was now cowed into submission. The turbulent Geraldines were practically exterminated, and the introduction of cannon into Irish warfare enabled the royal army to destroy the hitherto impregnable strongholds of the nobility (1536). In England the most serious rebellion, the Pilgrimage of Grace, broke out in the north, and for various reasons was joined by men of all classes (1536). The ascendancy of Cromwell had angered the nobles, whose pride could not bear the rule of a low-born man; the Statute of Uses alienated the landowners, as tending to prevent them from making provision for their children, other than the eldest; the destruction of the smaller monasteries, which had just been accomplished, was a source of discontent to the poor; and the Protestant character of the recently published "Ten Articles" had alarmed the whole population of the intensely conservative north. The rising assumed dangerous proportions, and, as the king had already rejected a petition embodying these grievances, thousands flocked to the banner of "the five wounds of Christ." The nobles either held aloof or openly joined the rebels, but the government secured the dispersal of the insurgents by a promise of a pacification, and then, finding a pretext in some renewed disturbances, punished them with a heavy hand. "You shall cause," wrote Henry to his general, the Duke of Norfolk, "such dreadful execution to be done upon a good number of the inhabitants of every town . . . as they may be a



THOMAS CRANMER, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY (1489–1556).

From an old engraving after the portrait at Lambeth Palace.

fearful spectacle to all other hereafter." The ring-leaders were all put to death, and a further rebellion in the West led to the execution of the leaders of the Yorkist party—the Marquis of Exeter and Lord Montague, the heads of the families of Courtenay and De la Pole. The relentless severity of Henry proved effectual ; there were no more rebellions as long as he was on the throne.

Although, however, active resistance was thus ended, the reactionary party shortly afterwards gained a complete triumph. Henry had never been really anxious for anything more than political separation from Rome, and any measures which appeared to imply doctrinal change may be ascribed either to a temporary political necessity, the danger from Charles V., or to the influence of his advisers. The death of Katherine and the execution of Anne Boleyn had been followed by the resumption of friendly relations with the Emperor, and the king was now able to prove his real "orthodoxy." The Ten Articles had been vague in their phraseology, and had been subscribed by both parties. They were now replaced by the Six Articles, which, while not qualifying the royal supremacy, definitely affirmed the cardinal points of the "old religion," insisting upon a belief in Transubstantiation, celibacy of the clergy, the observance of vows of chastity, communion in one kind only, private masses and auricular confession (1539). This declaration of doctrine remained in force until Henry's death, and, while Catholics were executed for maintaining the supremacy of the Pope, a like fate befel Protestants

who refused to confess the dogma of Transubstantiation.

Soon afterwards, Cromwell's ascendancy came to an end. He had constantly endeavoured to commit Henry to a definite party in the continental struggle, and he now negotiated a Protestant alliance. On the death of Jane Seymour, he persuaded the king to marry Anne, daughter of the Lutheran Duke of Cleves. But the lady proved to be unacceptable to the king, and Henry, who was already tired of Cromwell, seized the excuse to rid himself of him. The minister, like Wolsey before him, had no popularity upon which to fall back. He had alienated every class, except, perhaps, a few extreme Reformers, and his overthrow was hailed with general delight. A Bill of Attainder was passed, and he was executed (1540). Henry had already repudiated Anne of Cleves; he now married Catherine Howard, niece of the Duke of Norfolk, the chief champion of the old faith, and the reaction appeared to be complete. But the English Bible was retained, and a tendency to make some concessions to the Reformers was evidenced by the publication, under royal authority, of the "Necessary Doctrine and Erudition of a Christian Man."

Wars with Scotland and France occupied the closing years of the reign. It was one of Henry's favourite schemes to effect the union of England and Scotland by a marriage treaty, but James V. had preferred a French alliance and had married Magdalen of Valois, and, on her death, Mary of Guise. This formed the principal ground of quarrel between

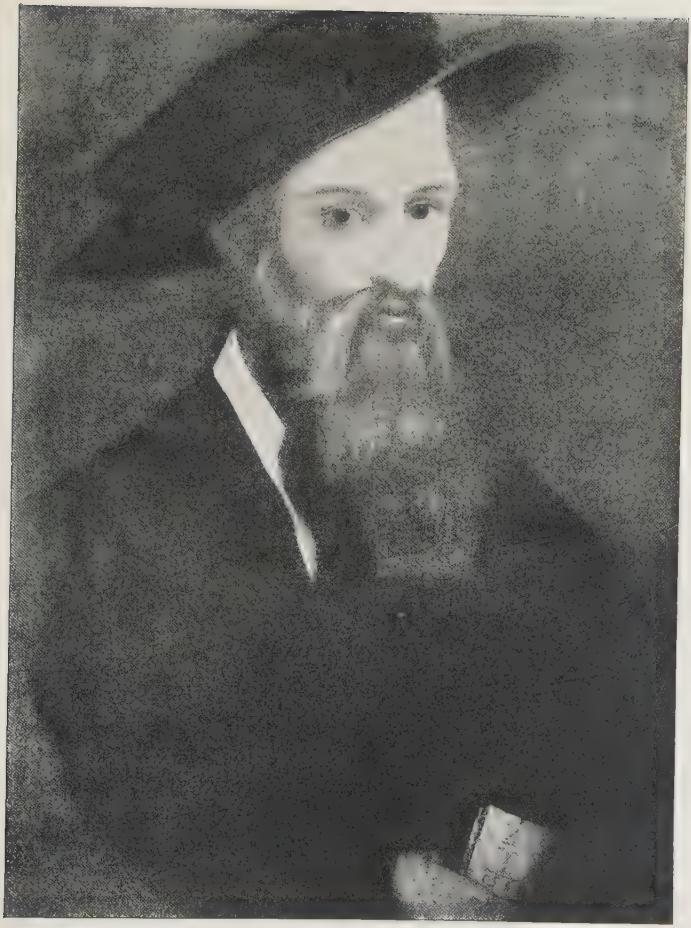
the two countries, and after some preliminary fighting on the border, Norfolk invaded Scotland. James collected an army, but it was defeated by a few local troops at Solway Moss (1542) and the king died of a broken heart, leaving an eight days' old child, the ill-fated Mary Stuart, to succeed him. The anarchy which followed prevented the Scotch from continuing the war, and Lord Hertford burnt Edinburgh and ravaged the country without opposition. Meanwhile, England had once more joined Charles in his contest with Francis. A great partition scheme was arranged by the allies, though the only result was the capture of Boulogne by Henry (1544). The Emperor presently made a separate peace, and the French prepared to revenge themselves by an invasion of England. The Isle of Wight was ravaged, while the English were defeated before Boulogne, but the operations were indecisive, and a treaty was soon concluded between all the belligerents. The peace was undoubtedly hastened on by the fact that Henry was dying, for the question of the regency became all important. A violent contest between Norfolk and Hertford, the leaders of the rival parties, took place during the last year of the reign, and ended, almost on the day of the king's death, in the triumph of the latter. The Earl of Surrey, the duke's son, was beheaded, and it was on the very day fixed for the father's execution that Henry breathed his last (1547).

In forming any estimate of the character of Henry VIII., it is necessary to break through the ordinary rule of history and to separate the man from

the king. As a man, he was almost wholly bad; he was the slave of his passions, and those passions were violent; he was cruel, vain, and licentious, and his personal courage was, perhaps, the solitary redeeming virtue. Such accomplishments as he possessed disappeared with his youth; his boasted learning was but slight. As a king, however, he presents a different aspect. Able, like all the Tudors, he was a strong ruler, and despite the fact that some of his acts were tyrannical, he never attempted to establish a despotism; for his intense passion for legality saved him from the reproach of being justly called an unconstitutional ruler. Everything which he did was sanctioned by the estates of the realm; his marriage with Jane Seymour, for example, was, if the expression may be used, authorised by Parliament, and even the prerogative of pardon was exercised through the same body, which granted him also release from his debts and gave to royal proclamations the force of law. And, though he probably knew beforehand that all his wishes would be readily carried out, the mere recognition of the authority of Parliament prevents his government from being rightly called an absolute monarchy. Abroad, too, he enabled England, despite his constant changes in policy, to take a much more prominent place in the council of nations, though it is an exaggeration to say that he made her the arbitress of Europe. She did not hold the balance between Francis and Charles, but her alliance became valuable, and she ceased to be merely a satellite of Spain, by the adoption of an independent, if

inconsistent, policy. Charles I. has been called a good man but a bad king; the converse is true of Henry VIII., and in the most important relation of life, therefore, he was a good man.

As soon as Henry VIII. was dead the country was given an opportunity to realise the advantages of his strong rule, and the disasters and disorder of Edward VI.'s reign, though due in some measure to the bad financial system of his predecessor, afford the best apology for the severity of the late king. Henry had attempted, in his will, to entrust the government, during his son's minority, to his executors, a neutral body in which all parties were represented. But this arrangement was abandoned; the Earl of Hertford, who was presently created Duke of Somerset, was declared Lord Protector, and the proposed regents were absorbed in the Council. Somerset had been the most successful soldier, the most prominent man, in the closing years of the late reign, but he was not qualified for his present post. He was a visionary, and though many of his ideas were good, he neglected the means whereby his end might be secured. He was impatient, and embarked hastily upon projects which he was unable to bring to a successful conclusion. And, at a time of great difficulty, when a strong ruler was needed, he was too gentle, or too scrupulous, to destroy his enemies. Once, indeed, he was severe; his own brother was executed for treason under his rule, and though the punishment was probably just, the severity was ill-timed. Finally, Somerset was a Reformer, and his religious innovations were unacceptable to the



EDWARD SEYMOUR, DUKE OF SOMERSET (? 1506–1552).

From a painting now in the possession of Sir E. Verney, Bart., at Rhianva.

majority of Englishmen. With such a ruler, success was impossible, but the Protector must not be wholly condemned. His faults were generally amiable, and it was his misfortune to be called upon to rule England at a time to which his ideas were unsuited, and when no one, perhaps, could have met with a full measure of success.

It has been already mentioned that one of Henry's wishes was to bring about the union of the crowns of England and Scotland, and he had proposed a marriage between Mary and Edward. But the antipathy between the two nations led to strong opposition to the match. The brief triumph of the Anglophil party, after the murder of Cardinal Beaton, was followed by a restoration of the French ascendancy in Scotland, and when Somerset went to the help of his friends, he was victorious, indeed, at Pinkie, but, by his very victory, increased the hatred for England (1547). The young queen was sent to France, where she married the Dauphin, the future Francis II., and, in its immediate results, the Protector's policy failed. He had, however, patronised the Protestant party in Scotland, and, in this way, did something to forward English interests in that country. He was unfortunate, also, in the rest of his foreign policy. Boulogne was closely invested by the French and held with difficulty, while lack of men and money prevented the giving of any effectual help to the German Protestants now engaged in the Smalkaldic war. At home the stability of his government was threatened first by his own brother, Lord Seymour of Sudeley, whom he caused to be put to

death (1548), and then by the ambition of Dudley, Earl of Warwick; while the violent partisanship, which characterised the Protector's religious policy, caused widespread dissatisfaction, increased by the sacrilege alleged to have been committed in the construction of Somerset House.

But it was the widespread social distress which eventually overthrew the government. The debasement of the coinage, begun under Henry VIII. and continued under Edward VI., and the prevalence of piracy, which revived with the weakening of the executive, caused prices to rise. The new landowners, successful merchants who had purchased estates, insisted upon the payment of rents and evicted defaulters, whereas the old nobility and the monasteries had been gentle with their tenants in this respect. And the continued increase of sheep farming threw many men out of work, while they could no longer seek refuge from starvation in the charity of the religious houses. At last the misery, resulting from these various causes, became unbearable, and insurrections broke out all over the country, taking the form of a demand for religious reaction in the Western, and for the destruction of enclosures in the Eastern, counties. Somerset was placed in a difficult position; for in his heart he sympathised with the rebels in their desire for social reforms, but yet he did not dare to take any effective measures to grant their demands, in the face of the opposition of the Council. And so, he acted half-heartedly and merely increased the confusion. Lord Russell, indeed, crushed the insurgents in the West, but,

under the leadership of Robert Ket, a tanner, the East became more and more inflamed and a species of government was established at the "Oak of Reformation," near Norwich 1549). Eventually, the Council forced Somerset to act, and Warwick was sent to crush the rebellion, after Lord Northampton had been defeated. The new general performed his work well, and his victorious return to London was the signal for the fall of Somerset.

Warwick succeeded to the authority of his rival, though without the title of Protector, but there was no improvement in the government. Boulogne, incapable of resisting any longer, was sold to the French, the currency was still further depreciated, and the violent Reformation went on. The execution of Somerset and an attempt to compel the Princess Mary to give up the Mass, which was foiled by the intervention of Charles V., made Warwick thoroughly unpopular, and as he had identified himself entirely with the Protestant cause, he realised that the death of Edward VI. and the accession of his sister would be the signal for his own execution. He therefore conceived the idea of transferring the crown to the descendants of Mary, daughter of Henry VII., whose representative was Lady Jane Grey, a Protestant, and the wife of Lord Guildford Dudley, a son of the Duke of Northumberland, to which title Warwick had now been exalted. In this attempt he had the support of Cranmer and the Reformers, who saw that their newly-acquired advantages would be lost if the Catholic Mary succeeded. Those advantages were considerable, for both Somerset and his

rival had laboured energetically to make the Church thoroughly Protestant. At the very opening of the reign, the Earl of Southampton was deprived of the Chancellorship, ostensibly for having neglected his duties, really because he was the leader of the reactionary party, and Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, was imprisoned for expressing his disapproval of innovations. The publication of a book of Homilies, framed on Protestant lines; the repeal of the Six Articles and of all legislation against Lollardry and Lutheranism; and the destruction of pictures and stained glass windows followed. Finally, Somerset and Cranmer issued the first Prayer Book of Edward VI., and passed the first Act of Uniformity (1548). With the accession of Northumberland to power, even more violent measures were adopted. Such bishops as adhered to the old religion were deprived, and Protestants of the stamp of Latimer, Hooper, and Ridley were appointed to the vacant sees. The confiscation of the property of religious bodies was carried still further, and the endowments of the Universities were partially appropriated. The influence of Calvin had now extended to England; the Second Prayer Book and the Forty-two Articles were framed in accordance with the school of Geneva (1552). But to the great majority of the people these changes were abhorrent, and the policy of Northumberland was only supported by the extreme men and by the refugees from the Continent. Political separation from Rome was, indeed, generally popular, but as yet there was no real wish for doctrinal reform. And as Northumberland resolved to stake all upon

a change in the succession, he secured a doubtful assent from the king, and as soon as Edward was dead, proclaimed Lady Jane Grey as queen (1553).

But the nation was unanimous in support of Mary; an attempt to capture her failed, and a few weeks after the death of the king, Northumberland was a prisoner in the hands of his enemies. He was executed, and his contemptible protestation of devotion to the new queen, and of his secret adherence to Catholicism, prevents any pity being felt for him. He was, indeed, a mere adventurer, without even the solitary virtue of courage which does something to redeem the character of many otherwise bad men. His innocent accomplice, Lady Jane Grey, and her husband were for the present merely imprisoned in the Tower. The ease, with which the plot of Northumberland had been defeated was due to the general desire to end the violent changes in religion, and to return to the state of things which had prevailed under Henry VIII. But Mary had really much more extensive plans, and a complete restoration of the old order could alone satisfy her conscience. For the present, however, the influence of Renard, the Spanish ambassador, served to restrain her, and she contented herself with the more moderate scheme and with the remodelling of the bench of bishops by the imprisonment or expulsion of the more extreme prelates. Most of these were deprived, and Cranmer and Latimer were sent to the prisons from which Gardiner and Bonner were released. Mary was, indeed, more anxious to accomplish another object; she had fallen in love with the portrait of Philip of

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CARDINAL POLE (1500-1558).

From the painting by Titian.

(*Reproduced by kind permission of Lord Arundell of Wardour*).

Spain, and to marry him was the darling wish of her heart. But the scheme was intensely unpopular in England, where it was feared that it would reduce the country to the position of a Spanish province and bind it irrevocably to union with the Catholic powers. When the queen pressed the scheme, a widespread conspiracy was formed to depose her in favour of Elizabeth. Sir Thomas Wyatt raised Kent and moved on London, and Mary's position was for a time one of extreme danger. But she threw herself upon the loyalty of the citizens ; Wyatt allowed himself to be deceived into negotiations, and though he did eventually penetrate into the city, his followers deserted him and he was arrested at Temple Bar (1554). The only result of the rising was to cause the execution of Lady Jane Grey and Lord Guildford Dudley ; an attempt to involve Elizabeth in the same fate being prevented by the moderate party, who represented that the inevitable consequence would be a revolution. Soon afterwards the marriage with Philip was accomplished, and Mary now thought that she was strong enough to complete the religious reaction, which had been interrupted.

Accordingly she induced Parliament to accept the papal absolution and acknowledge once more the supremacy of the Pope. Cardinal Pole, the last of the exiled Yorkist family, came back to England as Legate, and completed the work of reunion ; though in one respect a compromise had to be permitted, since it was found impossible to restore the confiscated property of the religious houses. The statutes against heretics were now revived ; and, though

Philip opposed persecution, his departure, which speedily followed, saw these laws rigorously enforced. All over England Protestants were hurried to the stake, the most prominent victims being Latimer, Ridley, and Hooper. Cranmer's death followed shortly afterwards (1555). The story of his execution—how he recanted and then recanted his recantation—is well known, and need not be repeated here. But, as it has been pointed out, his very weakness was a source of strength to the Protestant cause; the sympathy of thousands went out to the poor old man in the hour of his trial, and the final victory of his conscience braced many a fainting heart. It is not without reason that his name is remembered, paradoxical as it may seem to exalt a time-serving courtier into a saint. Cranmer did not possess any one of the qualities which go to make up a hero. He had humbly followed every change in Henry VIII.'s views, he had denied and reaffirmed every doctrine according to the mood of the king, he had been active in his support of the divorce of Katherine of Aragon and of the execution of Anne Boleyn, he had shared in all the violence of Edward VI.'s reign, he had given his allegiance to Lady Jane and to Mary, and his final profession of the Reformed faith was, perhaps, made only when he found that nothing would save him. But the eventual triumph of this weak, vacillating mind did more than the unbending sternness of a Latimer to confirm the faith of the other Reformers; they felt that the archbishop was a man like themselves, whereas the bolder spirits seemed to belong to another order of beings. And to Cranmer

the members of the Established Church, at least, must always feel gratitude as the man chiefly responsible for one of the noblest specimens of English prose, that Prayer Book, the accents of which have brought peace and consolation to many a sick and suffering mind.

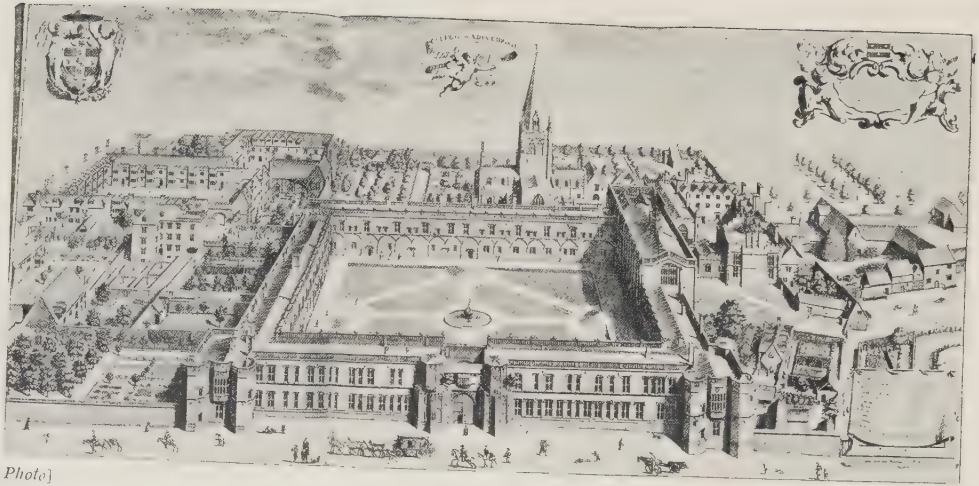
After the archbishop's death, the bloody work went on, gaining increased vigour from the discovery and frustration of a conspiracy. Mary grew more and more earnest in her endeavours to stamp out heresy, but the people sickened at the continued slaughter, her popularity waned and gave place to hatred, until the Pope himself and the Catholic princes besought her to stay her hand. England was now dragged into a war between France and Spain by her alliance with Philip, and the brilliant victory of St. Quentin was shared by English soldiers (1557). But the enthusiasm which this success might have aroused was quenched by the loss of Calais. The last foothold of England on the Continent was surprised and captured by the Duke of Guise, and, though it had ceased to be of any very great value, its fall was felt to be a national disgrace. The disaster destroyed the last traces of loyalty to the queen, and Mary was probably only saved from deposition by her death.

For this most unhappy and miserable of women one can feel nothing but a great pity. There is preserved her copy of the Liturgy, and in it two prayers are marked by constant use. They are those for Unity and for the Safe Delivery of a Woman in Childbirth. And they show the two desires which

dominated her throughout life—to see Christendom no longer divided and to be a mother. Narrow, bigoted, cruel was Mary, but most profoundly in earnest. And her lot was, indeed, most bitter. Neglected and deserted by her husband, whom she adored, she was left alone to face the failure of all her hopes. Her longed-for child—the advent of whose birth had actually been proclaimed—was never born. The religion, to which she was so passionately devoted, was threatened by the near approach of the accession of a heretic, and the holocausts, which she blindly ordered, failed to appease an angry God. Tortured by her conscience, racked by disease, abandoned by those to whom she trusted, desolate, without friends, without hope, she lived her sad, solitary life. Few stories, if any, in history are so infinitely pathetic as that of this unhappy queen, and some of that sympathy which is so readily extended to Mary Stuart may well be spared for Mary Tudor.

With the accession of Elizabeth there ceased to be any question of the permanent restoration of the "old religion," and, though the final constitution and doctrines of the Church had yet to be settled, the nature of the Reformation in England may be summed up at this point. The peculiar characteristic of the movement was the predominance of political considerations and the absence of great ideals and noble-hearted men. On the Continent, whatever may be thought of the characters of the Reformers, it cannot be seriously denied that they placed their religious convictions before everything, and that they

were convinced of the truth of that which they preached. But in England the Reformation originated in the lust of an immoral king, and was carried out by essentially worldly men. There can be no admiration for the private characters of Henry VIII., Cromwell, Cranmer, Somerset, or Northumberland ; one and all they acted from motives of political expediency, and their doctrines were conformed to the exigencies of the moment. Old Hugh Latimer, indeed, may appear to be an exception, but he was not a prime mover in the changes, and the brightness of his virtue is all the greater by reason of the surrounding darkness. It is, indeed, only among the subordinates that one can find much good. The heroes are insignificant men, great only in their deaths. And so there is little ennobling in the external history of the English Reformation ; for moral greatness it is necessary to seek among the records of the common herd. It is this which constitutes the first great point of contrast between the history of this period in England and on the Continent. And again, abroad the movement began from below and spread gradually upwards ; but here the reverse was the case. The reforms of Edward VI.'s reign, the time of the first great doctrinal changes, were forced by the government upon an unwilling people, and in face of even armed opposition. It was the Marian persecution which converted England to Protestantism. At that time the country saw the possibilities of Catholicism ; it saw the meaning of submission to Rome, and it learned a lesson which has not yet been forgotten. Up to the



Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

From a seventeenth-century print.

burning of Latimer and his fellows, the people, as a whole, were supporters of the old faith, thenceforth the majority was in favour of anything rather than that.

Upon the social and economic conditions of England the Reformation, involving as it did the partial disendowment of an institution which owned nearly half the real property in the country, could not fail to have a profound effect. By the dissolution of the monasteries, the possession of land passed into the hands of new men, whose aim it was to make as much profit as possible from their property. They, therefore, either raised rents very considerably or converted the farms into pasturage. The monks had been lenient with their tenants, and had been great employers of labour, for they desired rather to make each monastery self-supporting than to increase their already great wealth. And so, under the new conditions, numbers of men were thrown out of work, and from their ignorance of anything except agriculture, they could for the present find no employment. Moreover, in face of the competition of great landowners small farming ceased to pay; prices had risen with the rise in rent and the depreciation of the coinage, and were maintained at a high level by the class of wholesale dealers which now arose. As a result there was widespread distress, the country was filled with numbers of sturdy beggars, and crimes of violence enormously increased. The ridicule cast upon things, which had been formerly the object of great veneration, exemplified by parodies of the Mass and desecration of the Sacraments, led to scepticism

and a decline in morality, and, as is always the case with great movements, the doctrines of the Reformers were perverted into an excuse for vice.

Under the rule of Wolsey the Church had attained to the zenith of her material prosperity, but, from various causes, she now sank into comparative insignificance. Her intellectual superiority vanished with the revival of learning, which led to the spreading of knowledge among the people. Her wealth was impaired, and with it much of her grandeur disappeared. Her political influence was greatly decreased by the employment of laymen in the principal offices of state, where they presumed even to settle points of doctrine. And the separation from Rome made her truly national at the expense of her independence. Henry VIII. had complained that the clergy were really the Pope's subjects, but now they could no longer look abroad for help; they were reduced to obedience and deprived of their peculiar courts. In short, that fall of the Church, which had been delayed by the influence of the Crown, now took place, and the rise of Nonconformity which presently began reduced her to a condition of even greater subserviency.

In the same way the nobility declined also. This was partly the result of Henry VIII.'s character, which led him to prefer in any case men whose fortunes he had made and whose very importance depended upon himself and flattered his pride. But he was later on compelled to employ such ministers. The nobles as a class were opposed to his changes in the Church and hankered after the old order, and

it was clearly necessary to entrust the carrying out of those changes to men who sympathised with them. Henry found them in the middle class. Cromwell, a man of low birth, affords one example; and Northumberland, whose father was Dudley, the notorious extortioner, is another. And thus from force of circumstances rather than from deep considerations of policy, the work, which Henry VII. began, was continued, and all chance of a resuscitation of the old type of noble passed away.

It has been seen that under Henry VIII. Parliament continued to give unqualified support to the Crown, but in the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary it showed signs of a wish to reassert its independence. The statute, which gave to royal proclamations the force of law, was repealed, and though such proclamations were still issued, they were now at least illegal. During the regency of Somerset the multifarious treasons created in the preceding reign were abolished; and when a bill establishing new treasons was introduced, the Commons successfully insisted that the evidence of two witnesses should be essential to a conviction. They further resisted the passage of several bills introduced by government, and the creation of pocket boroughs, which began at this time, is a proof of the necessity of influencing Parliament and of obtaining its sanction to all measures. On the other hand, the reign of Henry VIII. witnessed the establishment of councils like that of the Marches of Wales and that of the North, which deprived a large part of the country of the benefits of the common law and restricted the authority of Parlia-

ment. But it must be mentioned that though they might become, and indeed did become, at a later date formidable engines of tyranny, yet in their inception they did good work in facilitating the maintenance of order, without which the growth of liberty was impossible.

There is indeed a bright side to the picture of this time. The consolidation of the kingdom, effected by the absorption of Wales and its division into counties was in itself a beneficial event. And, while agriculture was depressed and the older towns continued to decline, the prosperity of London and of the new centres of industry was still increasing. By the dissolution of the monasteries much wealth, which had hitherto been locked up, was put into circulation, and land began to change hands more rapidly, partly as a result of the Statute of Uses, by which the person for whose benefit an "use" was established, became the owner of the property. Though it sustained a throwback in the reign of Edward VI., commerce continued to grow, and even during that reign a new market was opened up by an expedition to Russia, which had been before this time practically an unknown land, but where the English now acquired a lucrative monopoly of trade. And, moreover, the intellectual liberty, which was one result of the Reformation, led to increased national energy, and hence to increased prosperity. In short, the depression was merely temporary—the time of preparation for a period of unparalleled success.

VIII

THE ELIZABETHAN SETTLEMENT

(1558-1587

THE reign of Elizabeth falls naturally into two periods—in the first, England is standing on the defensive, and the queen engaged in the task of securing her position; in the second, that position has been secured, the time for a vigorous policy has arrived, and England assumes the offensive. At the time of her accession the position was one of very grave danger. Within, there was the religious difficulty: on the one hand, the Catholics had been so exalted in the last reign that they were not likely to submit tamely to the rule of their opponents; on the other, the Protestants were burning to revenge themselves upon their late persecutors. Without, England had to face hostility from France, Spain, and Scotland. The first and the last of these countries were united by old-standing ties of friendship, and by the marriage which had been arranged between Mary and the Dauphin, while a state of war already existed between France and England. From Spain the

danger was less pressing, but still very real. For the present, indeed, there was an alliance with Philip II., but it was to be feared that any clear return to Protestantism would lead to an open quarrel, while the existing connection was unpopular in England. Finally, Mary Stuart was regarded by many as the rightful queen—the marriage of Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn being considered as invalid—and by nearly every one as the next in the order of succession; so that she was a possible rival to Elizabeth, a probable centre round which the disaffected might rally; and in any case certainly a dangerous neighbour. And, with such a number of enemies to face, the new queen had necessarily to act with caution lest they should combine to crush her.

Elizabeth, therefore, was at first compelled, whether she wished it or no, to resort to compromise. The religious work of the last reign was undone by the repeal of the statutes against Protestants, the publication of a Prayer Book, the reassertion of the royal supremacy over the Church, and the passing of an Act of Uniformity; but no very decided steps were taken to repress the Catholics, and though all the bishops except one resigned, the majority of the clergy acquiesced. As a matter of fact, this policy pleased neither party, but each hoped that it would be eventually changed in accordance with their own views, the Catholics judging that the moderation of the queen proved her real sympathy with themselves, and the Protestants regarding the changes as merely preliminary measures which would be followed by more definite steps, so that both remained quiet for

the present. The less extreme men on either side were, perhaps, really satisfied. Meanwhile a peace had been concluded with France, in which there was a vague stipulation that Calais should be restored to England after a time (1558). And, though his offer of marriage was declined, Philip maintained friendly relations with the queen, being led to do so by his dread of an Anglo-French alliance. There was still a certain danger that Henry II. would give the English Catholics the support of French soldiers in an attempt to place Mary on the throne of England, but his accidental death removed this fear, the reign of his successor, Francis II., being troubled by the ambition of the Guises and the increasing strength of Protestantism in France.

For this escape from the danger which immediately threatened her, Elizabeth was largely indebted to the ability of her ministers. Of these the foremost was William Cecil, the future Lord Burleigh. He was gifted with pre-eminent ability, devoted before all things to the service of the queen, and a most skilful diplomatist. His advice was generally followed, but not always. He would in all probability have taken a decided line much earlier than was actually done, and would have assumed for England the championship of the Protestant cause almost at the very outset of the reign. But Elizabeth was by no means so enthusiastic as her minister, and was habitually inclined to steer a middle course whenever this was possible. Moreover, her personal favourites sometimes swayed her mind, though it is true that her good sense generally brought her back to her

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS (1542–1587).

After a picture attributed to François Clouet (Janet), in the National Portrait Gallery.

trust in Cecil. The most influential of her courtiers, Robert Dudley, afterwards Earl of Leicester, son of Northumberland, who was consistently opposed to the great minister, was never able to procure his dismissal, though he succeeded, perhaps, in occasionally thwarting his plans. The tortuous policy of the first half of the reign was due partly to the ever-present danger of a Catholic league against England, partly to the character of the queen, and partly to the rivalry between the two parties in the state—the ministers and the favourites.

As has been hinted already, it was the rivalry between Elizabeth and Mary Stuart which formed the pivot round which foreign policy revolved during the first part of the reign. The anti-English party had triumphed in Scotland; Mary of Guise, the queen-mother, had secured the regency by means of a compromise with the Earl of Arran, and, under her influence, the country was filled with French troops. But, meanwhile, the Reformation had made some progress, and the efforts of the Regent to suppress it led to the formation of a league between the Protestant nobles, who assumed the title of the Lords of the Congregation. Under the influence of John Knox they presently took up arms, ostensibly against the French, and, as the government received support from the Guises, they appealed to Elizabeth for help. But it was only granted after great hesitation, since the English queen had an inveterate hatred for rebellion, and though some troops were at last sent, and co-operated in the siege of Leith, a pacification was brought about by Cecil upon the

death of the Regent. By this arrangement, known as the Treaty of Edinburgh, the government was to be entrusted to a committee of twelve, while the French were to leave the country, and a settlement of the religious question to be effected by the Scotch Parliament (1559). The immediate results of the peace were the establishment of Protestantism as the state religion, and a proposal that Elizabeth should marry Arran and unite the two crowns. But this scheme was rejected in London, and the death of Francis II. led all parties to unite under Lord Moray, an illegitimate son of James V., in recalling Mary and in an attempt to free Scotland from all foreign influence. Despite the opposition of the English Court, the Scotch queen did return, and thus Elizabeth's chief enemy was on her borders with a temporarily united nation behind her.

Mary's first act was to demand that she should be recognised as heir to the throne of England, and, when this was refused, she placed herself in open hostility by marrying her cousin Henry, Lord Darnley, the head of the English Catholics. She then entered into alliance with the other anti-Protestant states, expelled the Lords of the Congregation, and checked the progress of the Reformation at home (1565). But her marriage was attended with disastrous results for herself. Darnley was coarse and brutal, and Mary, having quarrelled with him, sought consolation in more congenial society. But her husband was also jealous. He secretly recalled the exiled nobles, and caused Rizzio, his wife's chief favourite, to be torn from her arms and

murdered. Reconciliation then became impossible. Mary dissembled her anger while she organised her party with the help of Lord Bothwell, and her plot culminated in the assassination of Darnley and her own flight and marriage with the leader of the murderers (1567). This led the Lords of the Congregation to take up arms once more. The queen was defeated at Carberry Hill, imprisoned in Lochleven Castle, and compelled to abdicate in favour of her infant son. Less than a year later she escaped, but her hastily-raised forces being dispersed at Langside, she crossed the border and threw herself upon the generosity of Elizabeth (1568).

The presence of her rival so near home increased the difficulties of the English queen, great as they already were. She was indeed threatened on all sides. In the Netherlands there was the army of Alva, who had recently triumphed over the revolted Protestants and was ready and anxious to purge England of heresy. The slight assistance which she had rendered to the Huguenots had only served to irritate the French, without leading to the triumph of the Reformers, and she was no longer protected on this side by the existence of rivalry between France and Spain. At home, too, the conflict between the two parties had become more pronounced; the Puritans, as the more extreme Reformers began to be called, pressed for more vigorous measures against their rivals; while the Catholics, who no longer hoped for a restoration of the old order by Elizabeth, were intriguing with foreign states and were now given a leader in the

person of the fugitive queen. So critical, indeed, was the situation that a marriage with the archduke Charles of Austria was seriously contemplated, but despite the advantages of such a match, which would have ended the Spanish hostility and soothed the English Catholics, the queen was eventually unable to reconcile herself to the inevitable loss of her freedom of action. Equally unsuccessful was an attempt to settle the question of Mary's position. It was hoped that she might be induced to abdicate once more in favour of her son, since Elizabeth could not restore her to unrestricted liberty and was clearly unable to exercise any legitimate control over a neighbouring queen. With a view to hastening the accomplishment of this scheme, or of justifying the use of compulsion, it was arranged that the Lords of the Congregation should be called upon to answer for their rebellion, which would have given Moray the opportunity to produce the famous "Casket Letters," which, he alleged, proved Mary's guilt in connection with the murder of Darnley. But before anything could be done Elizabeth stopped the proceedings, fearing to anger the English Catholics at a time when Philip was adopting a hostile attitude owing to the depredations committed by English privateers. Nothing was settled at all, Mary remained a prisoner, and Moray ruled Scotland in the name of James VI.

There now begins that series of schemes and plots, which occupies the chief place in the history of England until the execution of the queen of Scots, and which had for their object either the recognition

of Mary as heir to the English throne or the deposition of Elizabeth with a view to her immediate succession. For a time even the moderate Protestants wished to solve this question at once, until the opposition of the queen led them to agree to an indefinite postponement. It was, however, the Catholics, who were the prime movers in all these plots, and they received more or less open support from Spain. In the same year as that of the abortive investigation into Mary's case, the Duke of Norfolk attempted to raise the northern counties, with the object of marrying the captive queen, securing her acknowledgment as heir, and destroying the influence of Cecil. But the plot was detected, the duke arrested, and the other leaders forced to take refuge in Scotland (1569). The refusal of Moray to surrender the fugitives was followed by a quarrel between him and Elizabeth, and the withdrawal of her support led to his assassination, and the triumph of the anti-English party. At the same time France threatened war, only the renewed activity of the Huguenots preventing an attack upon England; while the publication of a papal bull, declaring that Elizabeth was deposed, seemed to justify the Catholics in plotting her overthrow. The final declaration of the Pope against the English queen was followed by the organisation of a much more formidable conspiracy. Ridolfi, an Italian banker, was the moving spirit in this new plot; he proposed that Mary should marry Norfolk, that Elizabeth should be deposed, and that Alva should assist in the re-establishment of Catholicism

by force of arms (1571). But Cecil's secret service agents were thoroughly efficient, the whole scheme was revealed to the English government, and Norfolk was arrested and executed. Though, however, the complicity of Mary was proved, nothing would induce Elizabeth to do anything against her.

Even this evidence of the inveterate hostility of the Catholic powers did not suffice to draw the English queen from her attitude of compromise. For a while, indeed, she acted in concert with France in the Netherlands, but before long the alliance was broken. It had been proposed that Elizabeth should marry the Duke of Anjou, or the the Duke of Alençon, brothers of the French king; and the latter, who was ambitious of founding a new kingdom in the Low Countries and even of becoming a Protestant leader, appeared for a time to be in high favour. But he had the misfortune to be ugly, and this fact, combined with his inordinate vanity, finally determined Elizabeth against him, and the rejection of his suit, coupled with her duplicity, ended the French connection. Shortly afterwards the massacre of St Bartholomew (1572) at once alarmed England and led to a renewal of the religious war in France, which rendered that country powerless. Elizabeth, professing great indignation, for a while gave energetic support to the Huguenots, but as their cause revived she grew lukewarm and resumed her former half-hearted policy. Indeed, during this period she was constantly changing sides, vacillating between an attempted resumption

of friendly relations with Spain and an inclination to finally throw in her lot with the Protestants. She was influenced by a fear that France might absorb the Netherlands, and consequently tried to keep both the revolted Dutch and the Huguenots in dependence on herself. For this reason, too, negotiations for the Alençon match were reopened, when he finally came forward as the leader of the Protestants in the Low Countries, but the opposition to it in England was too strong for anything to be done.

But events now occurred which eventually compelled her to take decisive measures. The work of combating Protestantism was taken over by the Society of Jesus, and a renewed vigour appeared in the Catholic councils. In Ireland, in Scotland, and in England there were attempts to overthrow the heretic queen. It was in the first of these countries only that their efforts were successful. A rebellion, headed by Desmond, failed, indeed despite the assistance of Spanish troops, but the growth of Protestantism was for ever checked (1580). The young Irish nobility were persuaded to seek their education in the Jesuit schools of the Continent, and the foundation of Trinity College at Dublin came too late to stop the exodus. When they returned to Ireland the Irish gentlemen were confirmed in their belief in Catholicism, and threw all their influence into the work of maintaining it in their own country, with the result that it has always been the religion of the majority in that island. In Scotland the Jesuits, after some temporary success, failed completely.

They sent thither Esmé Stuart, who obtained recognition as Earl of Lennox and established himself in the favour of the king, but the people were now thoroughly Protestant, and he soon quarrelled with the General Assembly. By the Raid of Ruthven his opponents secured the person of James, and put an end to the influence of Lennox (1582).

Meanwhile, two Jesuits, Campion and Parsons, had arrived in England, and in conjunction with the Spanish ambassador prepared a fresh plot. There was to be a general Catholic rising in favour of Mary, which was to be supported by both France and Spain. But while Philip hesitated, one of the conspirators, named Throgmorton, was arrested, and all the details of the scheme were known. The chief result of the plot was the rupture of diplomatic relations with Spain by the dismissal of the ambassador. Shortly afterwards the assassination of William the Silent by a fanatical priest, alarmed all England and increased the already existing apprehension as to the safety of the queen's life. The majority of Englishmen, however much they might have desired even the deposition of Elizabeth, shrank from the idea of murdering her, and the chief men of both parties united in signing the "Bond of Association," declaring that they would protect her life by every means in their power and oppose to the death the succession of any one in whose favour an assassination was perpetrated (1584). And while the murder of the Prince of Orange served in England to increase the popularity and

security of the queen, it defeated its own ends in the Netherlands. After failing in an attempt to induce Henry III. of France to declare war against Spain, Elizabeth consented to help the revolted provinces, receiving the title of Protector of the States, sending across an army under the command of Leicester, and having certain places handed over to her as guarantees of the good faith of her allies. But she still continued her efforts to avoid open war, and, while taking care that her army in the Netherlands should be too weak to accomplish anything decisive, betrayed the confidence which had been reposed in her by intriguing with Philip. The English troops, after making a brave, but ineffectual, attempt to raise the siege of Zutphen (1586), were left without supplies or reinforcements, while Parma, the greatest military genius of the age, gained success after success.

Indeed, it seemed as though Elizabeth would sacrifice the Dutch, when the discovery of a fresh plot finally convinced her of the futility of her hopes of a compromise with Catholicism as represented by Spain, and led her to take decisive measures at last. The new conspiracy, headed by Anthony Babington, at the instigation of Ballard, a Jesuit, was deliberately aimed at the queen's life (1586). As soon as the proofs of the plot were complete and in the hands of Walsingham, the Secretary of State, the ringleaders were arrested, and the papers which were found on them, combined with previous information, proved that the scheme had received the sanction of Mary. Her

letters were also seized, and additional proof thus secured. She was arraigned before a commission of peers at Fotheringay, unanimously found guilty upon all counts, and condemned to death. Still nearly four months elapsed before Elizabeth could bring herself to take the irrevocable step of signing the necessary warrant. At last she did so; Burleigh and Walsingham hurriedly despatched it to Fotheringay, and two days after the signature had been obtained Mary was beheaded in Fotheringay Castle. With almost her last breath she bequeathed her rights to the English throne and the task of avenging her death to Philip of Spain (1587).

It is no wonder that the picture of a beautiful queen, led forth to execution on a cold, grey winter's morning, should excite much pity, or that Elizabeth should be assailed with invective as the murderer of her guest. And for this pity there is some real ground. Mary was to a great extent the victim of circumstances. Educated in a foreign country, in a land, moreover, of polished manners and arbitrary government, she was called upon, at a time of grave difficulty, to rule a rough and independent people of whose character and ideas she was hopelessly ignorant. From the very day of her arrival in Scotland she was treated with a lack of respect and consideration which almost forced her to retaliate. Those objects which she had been taught to regard with veneration were ridiculed in her very presence, and she was obliged to submit to being called an idolatress and to being lectured on her incapacity and superstition by the con-

scientious, but uncourtly, John Knox. For political reasons she married a man utterly unsuited to her, and his violence and harshness led her to indiscretions and crimes. Even if she were wholly cognisant of the plot to murder Darnley, much may be urged in excuse for her conduct—the previous excesses of her husband, the insupportable bitterness of her position, made a catastrophe inevitable. But while there is much to be said in defence of Mary's conduct, Elizabeth stands fully justified. From the time that she crossed the border until the day of her death the queen of Scots was a constant source of danger not only to the peace and security of her rival's throne, but to the very independence of England, since the success of any of the plots in her favour would have led to the ultimate subjection of the country to Spain. And so, if it is ever right to put any one to death for political reasons, Elizabeth's conduct was justifiable on these grounds alone. But when Mary, after signing the "Bond of Association," gave her approval to a scheme for the assassination of the queen of England she thereby forfeited every claim to consideration. It became, in fact, a question whether she or Elizabeth should die, and by the first law of human nature, that of self-preservation, her execution was both necessary and right, however regrettable it might be.

And with the execution of Mary the first part of Elizabeth's reign ends. England, thenceforth, was in open rivalry with Spain, and appears as the champion of Protestantism and freedom against

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE (? 1540–1596).

From an etching by Vertue.

Catholicism and despotism. All possibility of a reconciliation with Spain and of a return to the old order disappeared when the axe fell at Fotheringay, and the deed done on that day in February ushered in the most glorious period, perhaps, in the whole of English history, when an attack by an apparently irresistible power was defeated, when the supremacy of England on the sea was established, and when the might of England was feared as it had never been before. And to this great epoch, the period immediately before it was an introduction. It was a time of preparation; of apparent weakness, but really of growing strength; a time of consolidation and settlement; a time of half-measures and of cautious policy; a time of diplomacy and avoidance of war.

It is a little curious that the queen, with whose name the splendour of the succeeding period is so indissolubly connected, should have been opposed to the course of action which led to that splendour and should have prevented its earlier adoption. And yet so it was. Elizabeth was by nature peaceful. She was fond of moderate counsels, and constitutionally averse to all extremes. Had Cecil been given a free hand, the struggle with Spain would have come much sooner; but the queen would not act decisively, until she had no choice but to do so. And it is to this side of her character that the apparent purposelessness of her foreign policy until the death of Mary is due. She attempted to play off France against Spain, the Huguenots against the Catholics, the Dutch against the Spaniards, and Mary

against James VI. By giving a little help here and a little there, by preventing the complete triumph of any party, she hoped to avoid real war. And this is the key to her somewhat obscure policy. But moreover, as has been seen, she disliked rebellion; partly from a fear that the example might prove disastrous to her own peace, partly from her high idea of the sacredness of the royal office. And the influence of her favourite, Leicester, must not be ignored; she occasionally followed his advice and, as has been said, that advice was always contrary to Cecil's. It was only when the danger as well as the impossibility of temporising any longer was brought home to her, by the discovery of Babington's plot, that she at last consented to adopt the policy which her ministers had so long advocated in vain. Mary owed her long immunity from punishment to Elizabeth's fear of forcing an open rupture with Spain, and her execution was a sign that such a rupture had been decided upon.

In the settlement of the Church, the great event of the first half of the reign, Elizabeth's love of compromise is equally obvious. Her own religious convictions were not strong; in so far as she had any views on doctrine, they were Catholic rather than Protestant. But she was compelled by political necessity to break with Rome. The daughter of Anne Boleyn was illegitimate in the eyes of all true Catholics; her title to the throne was denied by many, and the Papacy consistently refused to recognise her. As a result, the Act of Supremacy was necessary to her safety; she was unable to

admit the jurisdiction of a hostile power in England. But in the Prayer Book she displayed her wish to satisfy both parties and to bring them both into the Church. And so, on vital points, its language is studiously ambiguous; it admits, as it was intended to admit, of two diametrically opposite interpretations, both of which can be justified by an appeal to the theological writings of that time. The acceptance of the Prayer Book by the vast majority of the clergy is the strongest proof that it was regarded as a compromise, and the resignation of the bishops may be attributed to political, rather than to religious motives. It is very improbable that the bishops and the clergy differed in their views. It is conceivable that their position, which involved, in those days, more or less close intercourse with the sovereign, was by no means pleasant when that sovereign was opposed to them in her political views; and this is certainly a more reasonable explanation than to suppose that the episcopal bench enjoyed an almost complete monopoly of spirituality. History goes to show that scruples of conscience have been more readily felt in the lower, than in the higher, ranks in the Church. By the mass of the people these measures were regarded as merely preparatory, and the Commons were anxious to make a much more decided advance in the direction of Calvinism.

It was the zeal with which the Catholics supported the claims of Mary, the publication of the papal bull of deposition, and the arrival of the Jesuit missionaries in England, which compelled Elizabeth, not indeed to modify the doctrines of the Church, but

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616).

From the title-page of the First Folio of 1623.

to persecute those who refused to take the oath prescribed by the Second Act of Supremacy. At the beginning of the reign great caution had been exercised in the administration of this oath; the bishops had definite instructions not to press for its acceptance in case of a first refusal, so that the only penalty which such refusal entailed was that of *præmunire*; and Lord Montague urged in Parliament that the Act was both unnecessary, wrong and dangerous. But the attitude of the Catholics in refusing open conformity, after the decision of the Council of Trent against that practice, and still more the Duke of Norfolk's plot, led to increased vigilance and rigour. The Thirty-nine Articles were at last made binding on the clergy; the open statement of the Catholic view of the queen's title was declared to be high treason; and the introduction or use of things blessed by the Pope was forbidden. The discovery of Ridolfi's plot, followed by the activity of the Jesuits, led to further severe measures. It was thought, not without considerable reason, that Catholic and traitor were synonymous terms, since the foreign missionaries taught that the queen was a heretic and usurper and might lawfully be put to death, and granted absolution only to such as accepted this doctrine. Further statutes were enacted to supplement the already existing laws, and the persecution became far more vigorous, from this time to the end of the reign. The Jesuits and other alien priests were the object of special severity; their presence in the country was declared to be an act of high treason, and any one who either gave them

food, or failed to report their presence to the authorities, was also punished. The great danger which existed from Catholic plots, and the widespread treason disclosed by the discovery of Throgmorton's conspiracy, justifies, to a certain extent, the Elizabethan persecution. Moreover, by the provisions of the papal bull, it was impossible to be both loyal to the queen and obedient to the Pope, and it was not unreasonable to fear that strict Catholics might prefer to observe their religious, rather than their national, obligations. And further excuse, though not justification, is found in the natural desire to avenge the injuries sustained by Protestants on the Continent and by English crews at the hands of the Holy Inquisition. But there can be no palliation for the continued ill-treatment of the Catholics in the latter part of the reign, when they had conclusively proved their loyalty by their services against the Armada.

Into the highly controversial question as to the exact extent of doctrinal change effected by the Elizabethan settlement, it is not necessary to enter at length. It may be suggested, however, that the question is incapable of solution—that neither view can be conclusively proved. As already pointed out, the contemporary theologians are themselves divided, the expressions in the Prayer Book are ambiguous, and the whole settlement was essentially of the nature of a compromise. If some of the Thirty-nine Articles appear to be conceived in the spirit of Geneva, others have exactly the contrary character; while all may be professed by men holding most

divergent views, owing to a certain obscurity in their wording. As a matter of fact, nearly every theologian has a slightly varying idea as to the precise doctrines of the Established Church, for the reason that these doctrines have never been perfectly clearly defined. Some changes, rather of ceremonial than of doctrine, were indeed made. The practice of confession was retained but ceased to be compulsory; the doctrine of transubstantiation was abandoned in favour of an ambiguously worded assertion of the Real Presence, the nature of this Presence not being clearly defined; the observance of certain rites ceased to be obligatory, and various minor changes were affected. In short, the Church became Protestant in a political sense, while being in doctrine "a half-way house between Rome and Geneva," with such vagueness in the statement of her beliefs that a Catholic could almost join her communion, if he sacrificed papal supremacy, and a Calvinist, if he did not object to Episcopacy.

Both to the adoption of a spirited foreign policy and to the establishment of a National Church, the Elizabethan sailors contributed in no small degree. With the exception of a brief interval in the reign of Edward VI., commerce had been steadily growing since the time of Edward IV., and a variety of causes led to a remarkably rapid expansion under Elizabeth. The prosperity of Flanders was temporarily ruined by the war of independence; the traders, from considerations of safety, began to remove their business houses from that country to London, and that city became a really commercial centre. An

EDMUND SPENSER (? 1552–1599).

From an engraving by W. B. Scott, 1839.

expedition, sent to discover the North-East Passage and bearing letters vaguely addressed to the "rulers" of the country at which they might arrive, entered the White Sea and opened up relations between England and Russia. Ivan the Terrible regarded the English with great favour; they were allowed to establish factories at Archangel and Moscow, and an Englishman was selected as envoy to the Khans of Central Asia. A profitable overland trade was started between that district and Moscow by way of Astrakan, and the accounts brought back to England of the strange lands visited in this way, contributed to encourage the already existing spirit of adventure. At the same time, the Hanseatic monopoly was broken down, the German house at the Steelyard was closed, and the English trade in the Baltic and North Sea passed into native hands. But it was to the Western Ocean that the minds of English sailors chiefly turned. Ever since Sebastian Cabot had returned to Bristol with the news of his discoveries, ships had been frequently despatched to the coast of North America. An extensive cod-fishery was started off Newfoundland and Labrador, while the hope of discovering the North-West Passage led to much exploration in the north-westerly direction.

But these regions were cold and inhospitable, and the imagination of the English adventurers was excited by the glowing descriptions of the Spanish lands, where the climate was warm, the country fertile, and where untold wealth might be acquired. A desire arose to share in the advantages of these happy lands, but as long as England was Catholic,

the bull of Pope Alexander, which had divided the New World between the Spaniards and the Portuguese, stood in the way of an attempt to encroach upon the preserves of these two nations. And so, commercial jealousy contributed to convert the English to Protestantism, that their religion might be an excuse for an attack on Spanish-America and not a hindrance. With the accession of Elizabeth, attacks began to be made by English sailors upon the treasure ships from the West Indies, Mexico, and Peru. At first these were delivered in conjunction with the Huguenots, with Rochelle and Plymouth as the bases of operations. But presently the operations were extended; the hardy Devonshire seamen crossed the Atlantic, and the name of Sir Francis Drake was a source of terror to the Spanish settlements. It had not been thought worth while to defend them with forts, and they and their riches thus fell an easy prey to the English adventurers. Philip, in vain, remonstrated with Elizabeth; she disowned the raiders but neglected to take any effective measures to stop them. Equally useless were the severe punishments inflicted upon any crews which were captured; the misfortunes of their comrades merely stirred the survivors to avenge them; while the wealth obtained, combined with the adventures experienced, led fresh men to engage in these expeditions. The queen herself shared in the spoil; and, to her eternal shame, participated in a new source of gain, introduced by Sir John Hawkins. This was the slave trade, which had begun before, but in which he was the first Englishman to engage.

The disgrace of this traffic in men cannot be excused upon any grounds, and it is not even reduced to any great extent by the opinion of the age; for at an earlier date Isabella the Catholic had expressly forbidden the introduction of slave labour into Hispaniola and had thus set an example, which was unfortunately not followed either in Spain or elsewhere.

But these predatory exploits roused Philip to action. The towns on the islands and on the coasts of Mexico and Guatemala were fortified, and the seas patrolled by a Spanish fleet. As he was engaged in the usual work of plunder, Hawkins was attacked and barely escaped with the loss of his spoil and most of his ships. It became much more dangerous to attack the West Indies. Drake accordingly resolved to seek a new field of action and to penetrate into the Pacific, of which Englishmen only knew by hearsay. Accordingly, he sailed across the Atlantic, passed through the strait of Magellan, and passed up the coasts of Chili and Peru. He was everywhere thought to be a friend until too late; the defenceless towns were plundered, and his ships were laden with booty when he at last turned homewards. He came back round the Cape of Good Hope; the first Englishman to sail round the world (1577). In Spain the news of his voyage was received with mingled anger and surprise. It had been thought that the west coast of South America at least was safe from the English, and the revelation that this was by no means the case determined Philip to attempt the conquest of England. But, though the

resolve was taken, he hesitated to put it into action until the execution of Mary gave him at once a better excuse and a better chance of success. Still it was the exploits of the English sailors on the Spanish main which really led to the fitting out of the Invincible Armada.

While the final rupture with Rome was due largely, if not entirely, to commercial causes, Protestantism in its turn reacted upon commerce, since it caused a great outburst of national energy in all directions. Whatever views may be held as to the truth or reverse of Catholicism, an impartial mind must acknowledge that that religion is essentially opposed to freedom of intellectual speculation. The whole history, past and present, of those countries where it has, or does, possess anything like a complete ascendancy, goes to illustrate this point. And, indeed, the fundamental basis of its policy is a negation of the right of private judgment in the very matters upon which that judgment is most likely to be first exercised. Consequently, as long as Catholicism was supreme in England, men's minds were confined by the necessity of accepting without question certain dogmas; intellectual growth was stunted, mental activity limited. But the essence of Protestantism is the admission of the inalienable right of every man to hold and to expound whatever doctrine he pleases, and though Protestant churches have persecuted, that is, have attempted to interfere with this right, such conduct is wholly contrary to the spirit of the Reformation—itself a protest against the compulsory acceptance of certain beliefs. Now,

when the new ideas spread to England, they led to intellectual activity; in theology first, and subsequently in all branches of learning, since the previous restrictions upon speculation were broken down. It is true that, before the Reformation began, the "Utopia" had been published and that it is full of startling novelties, as compared with the general opinions of that time; but More was the one exception to the general rule in England, as his friend Erasmus was on the Continent. Real activity began at the later date and its fruit is seen in the Elizabethan literature.

The reign of the great queen produced more works of immortal value than any other one period of English history, and the names of the authors of this time are household words all the world over; their fame is not confined to the limits of the Anglo-Saxon race. In themselves, the plays of Shakespeare would have been sufficient to give everlasting fame to the literature of a country. Though Buckhurst, Greene, and Marlowe anticipated him in the production of plays in which the characters were no longer merely artificial, Shakespeare stands far above either them or any other dramatist of Western Europe by reason of the grandeur of his conception, the depth of his insight into human nature and the force and sublimity of his language. For his peer as a writer of tragedy or comedy it is necessary to look back to the brightest age of Athens; and since he was equally great in both branches of his art, he must be placed above even Sophocles or Aristophanes. The variety and extent of his observations, the richness of his

BEN JONSON (? 1573–1637).

From the painting by Gerard Honthorst.

vocabulary, and the multiplicity of the themes with which he dealt, are alike wonderful. But he was not alone in his greatness. Few may now be able to say that they have read the whole of the "Faerie Queene," but Edmund Spenser's poem remains the greatest of allegories in verse, a worthy counterpart in English literature to Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." In poetry, too, the same age produced Ben Jonson, whose reputation would have been much greater had he not been overshadowed by his great contemporary and rival in the dramatic art, and even the "Arcadia" of Sir Philip Sidney, dull as it is, is not wholly destitute of merit. And the genius of the time was not confined to one or two branches of literature. Hooker produced his deeply thought-out "Ecclesiastical Polity," a contribution of lasting value to the study of political theory. Camden shed light upon the antiquities of his country. Gilbert wrote upon natural philosophy, and Hakluyt told of the many lands to which his countrymen had voyaged. To the era of Elizabeth belong also the names of Bacon, whose versatile mind led him to write upon nearly every subject possible and whose ability caused him to illuminate them all, Burton, the compiler of the strange "Anatomy of Melancholy;" and Raleigh, who was author, politician, courtier, and explorer at one and the same time. The energy of the period shows itself in this brilliant literature; it led to a new force of expression, vigour of style, and great originality of thought, and made the Elizabethan era the most splendid in English literary history.

But there is a deeper significance to be attached to

the fact that great authors flourished at this time. A nation struggling for liberty produces few works of genius, and a nation groaning under a hopeless despotism produces fewer still. The great literary epochs in the history of a people are the times when liberty has just been lost or when it is about to be regained. When Octavian had triumphed over the freedom of Rome, there followed the Augustan Age, all the ability which could no longer be devoted to the service of the state, turned into the paths of literature. When the ceaseless wars and terrible misgovernment of Louis XV. had made the tyranny no longer supportable in France, the first strivings after liberty appeared in the writings of the Encyclopædists. And so the Elizabethan literature is the outward and visible sign of the quiet growth of political independence, as well as the outcome of the deliverance of the national mind from the shackles of an intolerant dogmatism. It is evidence that England was beginning to awake; that the nation was preparing to resume the rights which it had for a while surrendered to the sovereign, and that a great struggle was impending. It was, in short, the first indication of the beginning of that movement which culminated in the Great Rebellion.

IX

THE STRUGGLE WITH SPAIN

(1587–1603)

THE execution of Mary Stuart was, in reality, a declaration of war against the Catholic powers of the Continent, but the civil disturbances in France prevented the Guises from going to the help of Philip and left England and Spain face to face. Although Elizabeth displayed great anger, whether real or assumed, at the precipitancy of her ministers, she deceived no one as to the true significance of the scene enacted at Fotheringay. The Catholics of Europe abandoned any faint hopes which they may have still entertained of winning the queen back to the true fold, and the Protestants were at one with their opponents in regarding the cause of England as identical with their own. But at the same time, like all the so-called "wars of religion," the present struggle was not fought simply and solely on a question of abstract theology. Philip was, as he professed to be, the champion of Catholicism, but he was no idealist and he would never have gone to

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

PHILIP II., KING OF SPAIN (1527–1598).

From the painting by Alonso Sanchez Coello in the National Portrait Gallery.

war purely in order to re-establish the papal supremacy or the Latin Mass in England. The real point at issue was not whether the English Church and people should be compelled to acknowledge once more the authority of the Pope, but whether England should be allowed to have a share in the riches of the New World, whether she should be allowed to become a great power, and more, whether she should be allowed to retain her independence. The Armada threatened the religion of England; it did much more, it threatened her whole future prosperity and menaced her very existence. It was this which the English Catholics realised; it was this which caused them to rally round a queen who persecuted them, to die for a religion which they hated, to place their country before all else, and to display a patriotism which has rarely been equalled and never excelled in the history of the world.

Philip had begun to prepare for the invasion of England even before Mary's death. Ever since Drake had ravaged the coast of Peru and Elizabeth had refused to punish him, the Spanish king had been convinced that the only security for his American possessions lay in the subjection of the country whence the daring robbers came. And, moreover, the conquest of the revolting Dutch appeared to be hopeless as long as they received substantial help from the English government and from English merchants, whenever they were reduced to extremities. As soon, therefore, as the union of Spain and Portugal had been effected, all the harbours of the Peninsula, of Naples, and of Sicily were filled

with the bustle of preparation. The resources of the three kingdoms were strained to the uttermost; ships and stores were collected and everything possible was done to ensure the success of the great attempt. Drake, however, was not idle; he forced his way into Cadiz, and did so much destruction in that port that the sailing of the expedition was delayed for nearly a year (1587). But at last all was ready, a fleet of between one hundred and thirty and one hundred and fifty sail was assembled in the Tagus, and Philip might well feel confident of success. Not only were the ships the pick of the Spanish navy and far superior in tonnage to any which could be brought against them, but the crews were fired with religious enthusiasm by the blessing of the Vicar of Christ; they numbered amongst them the veterans who had shared in the glorious day of Lepanto, and they were members of a service which had never yet tasted of defeat in any engagement. There seemed to be but one disquieting fact, the Marquis of Santa Cruz, who had been given the command, had died almost on the eve of departure, and it was hard to replace such an experienced admiral. With strange perversity Philip fixed his choice on the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who only accepted the post under great pressure, and who knew more of horticulture than navigation, and preferred oranges to ships.

But, despite this foolish appointment, the English appeared to be little capable of withstanding the attack of Philip's great armament. The royal navy consisted of but thirty ships and they were of doubtful value owing to the slight care which had been

bestowed upon them. For its main strength, the defending fleet relied upon Drake's privateers and the vessels lent willingly by merchants and fishermen, and these were mostly much inferior in size to the ships of the Armada. Moreover, the queen dealt out supplies with a very sparing hand, the pay of the crews was in many cases in arrears, the fleet was short of ammunition and short of food. But the English had several important advantages. The low freeboard of their vessels made them difficult targets and the Spanish fire very often passed over them. In numbers they possessed a slight superiority and the ships were much faster and much more easily manœuvred. Their armament was proportionately heavier, their guns had much greater penetrating power, and while the Armada could practically sail only before the wind, the English ships were able to tack and consequently to sail round their enemies and concentrate their fire upon their more vulnerable points. Operating in home waters the English were near their bases; they were commanded by skilful admirals in whom they had every confidence; the crews were composed of men who were devoted to their queen, and who combined with all the chivalrous loyalty of the knight-errant of fiction, a rational love of freedom, religious enthusiasm, and a strengthening patriotism. In the case, at least of the privateers, the sailors had been hardened by long voyages to the West Indies and to the American continent, while all were used to the choppy seas of the Channel which prostrated hundreds of their enemies with sea-sickness, since they were accustomed only to the com-

paratively calm Mediterranean or the steady swell of the Atlantic. Finally, the Spaniards were handicapped by their own faults. The plan of operations was badly conceived, depending as it did to a great extent upon an exact fulfilment of dates. The Armada was intended to cover the passage of Parma and his army to the east coast; the duke had suspended active operations against the Dutch and collected a number of transports, but when he was ready the fleet had not come and he was unable to cross without a convoy. Meanwhile, a combined English and Dutch squadron watched the shores of Flanders, and Parma was harassed by the rebel army which he dared not attack lest when the Armada came he should not be ready to invade England at once. And an unwise attempt was made to utilise the attacking fleet to transport reinforcements to the duke; nearly twenty thousand soldiers were embarked, and as a result the ships were very much undermanned.

It was in May, 1588, that amid the chanting of psalms and the singing of anticipatory Te Deums, the great armament weighed anchor from Lisbon, but misfortune attended it from the outset. A storm obliged it to scatter, some loss was sustained and it was not until the end of July that it was first sighted in the Channel off the Lizard. Meanwhile the English fleet had been collected in Plymouth Sound. The supreme command with the title of High Admiral was committed to Lord Howard of Effingham, a cousin of that Duke of Norfolk who had been executed for high treason. His abilities were considerable and his caution was useful in restraining the

impetuosity of his subordinates, but possibly the fact that he was a Catholic contributed more than anything else to his appointment, since such an act of confidence could hardly fail to appeal to his co-religionists and to tend to confirm any waverers in their allegiance. Under him were more famous men —Drake, who commanded the privateers; Hawkins, who had charge of the royal ships; and Frobisher, who had but recently returned from his Arctic expedition. To these were subsequently added many other well-known men, such as Raleigh and the younger Cecils, who fitted out ships of their own, sailed out of the southern ports and joined in the attack. The squadron in the Straits of Dover was commanded by Lord Seymour, a son of the Protector Somerset.

The English allowed the Armada to pass before Plymouth, whence it was seen in crescent formation, seven miles from horn to horn, and to get well into the Channel before they began to attack it seriously. But as soon as it was fairly in the narrow seas they proceeded to manœuvre round it, delivering a series of attacks and cutting off all stragglers. First blood fell to Drake, who captured "the great galleon of Andalusia" and a large ship in which much treasure had been stored. Medina Sidonia made but little effort to repel the attacks; he felt bound to hasten to join Parma as quickly as possible, and foolishly true to the plan of operations bore steadily up Channel. For ten days the running fight continued; the English were unable to stay the advance of the Armada and did really very little actual damage to it, but each day they gained confidence while the Spaniards became

demoralised. At last Calais was reached, but there Medina Sidonia learnt that Parma was now blockaded by the Dutch, and accordingly not feeling equal to fighting a battle at once, cast anchor and resolved to give his men a short rest. But he had not made allowance for the daring of the English. During the night eight fire-ships were sent into the midst of the Spanish fleet, which being crowded together and now filled with panic, fell into the utmost disorder. The Spaniards cut their cables and attempted to escape to sea, but their enemies were waiting for them and they suffered heavy loss. To complete the disaster a storm arose which caused much destruction, and the coast of the Low Countries was strewn with wreckage. On the two following days the final engagement took place off Gravelines; again the superior seamanship of the English carried the day, and the Armada as a fighting force ceased to exist. Abandoning all hope of success, Medina Sidonia thought only of making good his escape to Spain; the wind settled his course and he fled northwards. The English pursued their defeated enemy as far as the Firth of Forth, where their supplies ran short and they were forced to abandon the chase. But the gales of the northern seas completed the work of destruction; only fifty-three ships returned to Spain, the remainder were wrecked on the inhospitable shores of Scotland and Ireland, where the unhappy crews met with scant mercy at the hands of the barbarous inhabitants. Philip bore the news that all his fair hopes had been blasted with much outward composure, thanking God that the disaster had not been even greater,

but the naval power of Spain had been irretrievably shattered and the destruction of the Armada marks the first step in the decline and fall of that country.

For their success the English had been greatly indebted to fortune. The delay in the starting of the expedition, the result mainly of the death of Santa Cruz, and the storm which overtook the fleet, had enabled them to complete their preparations for defence, had given the Dutch time to co-operate with them against Parma, and had prevented the Guises from coming to the help of Philip. And the wind had favoured the fire-ship attack at Calais, had forced Medina Sidonia to retreat northwards, and had completed the practical annihilation of the Armada. Well might Elizabeth regard the victory as the result of the interposition of a Higher Power and re-echo the exclamation of Deborah and Barak, "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." For despite the elaborate measures taken to repel invasion, the navy and the weather saved England. It is true that a large army had been gathered together, and that the enthusiasm of the country had been great, but the soldiers, to whom the queen delivered a stirring oration at Tilbury, were untrained and ill-armed and commanded by Leicester, whose incompetence had been proved already. They would have been no match for the victorious and experienced veterans of Parma, who was himself the first general of the age, and who enjoyed the prestige of many a victory. Had the Spanish troops effected a landing, there can be little doubt that they would have conquered England and changed the whole history of mankind.

The immediate results of the defeat of the Armada were also of great and lasting importance. Not only did the English secure their independence, but they also obtained the command of the sea; the prestige of Spain sustained a severe blow, and England was for ever committed to a naval policy, to the fulfilment of her true destiny. The conduct of the Catholics in the great national crisis had shown that they were thoroughly loyal; henceforth there was no possibility of a successful rising against Elizabeth, there was no chance of a forcible restoration of Catholicism, while England no longer required to stand on the defensive, but was able to adopt more active measures. And yet, at first sight, it seems that there was no change in foreign policy; that the old plan of giving meagre help to Dutch and Huguenots was followed, and, in short, that half-hearted counsels still reigned supreme. Though the war with Spain went on, there were few vigorous operations; the destruction of Vigo (1589) by an armament, which had failed to restore Portugal to independence, and the burning of Cadiz (1596) by Howard and Essex, stand almost alone, and the other yearly expeditions against the Peninsula degenerated into mere raids. Elsewhere also assistance was, indeed, sent both to Henry of Navarre and to the revolted provinces, which did something to save the Protestant cause in each country from destruction, but the armies were too small to accomplish anything noteworthy.

But when the state of affairs abroad is taken into consideration, a reason will be found for this policy of comparative inactivity and it will be seen that Eng-

land did really avail herself of the great victory over the Armada to assume the offensive, though not on land. The Duke of Parma had recovered Flanders and the southern provinces for Spain, but all that is now the kingdom of the Netherlands remained unsubdued and continued to defend itself successfully. The Dutch had acquired a fleet and this fact, combined with the new naval superiority of England, enabled them to hamper communications between Spain and the Spanish army; the strength of Parma was subsequently dissipated by the duty of intervening in the quarrel between Henry IV. and the League, and, on the death of the great general four years after the defeat of the Armada, no successor of first-rate ability could be found to conduct a struggle which had proved to be beyond the powers of such men as Alva, Don Juan, and himself. In France, too, the balance of power was changed in favour of the Protestants, since the assassination of Henry III. led to the accession of his Huguenot namesake of Navarre. The Catholic cause thus ceased to be the royal cause, and the weakness of the League, by compelling its leaders to rely on Spanish help, led many Frenchmen to imitate their English co-religionists and to assist a heretic compatriot, rather than share in the triumph of an orthodox foreigner. It was obviously against the interests of England to secure the complete victory of one party in either of these two countries. France, united and in enjoyment of internal peace, would become as great a danger to English pre-eminence as Spain had been, as she had herself been before the outbreak of civil

Photo} *[Emery Walker.*

WILLIAM CECIL, LORD BURLEIGH (1520–1598).

From a painting by Marc Gheeraedts (?) in the National Portrait Gallery.

war, and as she actually did become at a later date. And already the Dutch were threatening English commerce; while to free Flanders would have been to revive the old competition between Antwerp and London and to ruin the latter city. There was, therefore, a very strong reason why the help which was given to the Continental Protestants should not be very great; the right policy was to prevent Spain from recovering her provinces or dominating France, but not to hasten the cessation of the struggle in either country. But an even stronger argument against very active intervention, and one not based on considerations of temporary expediency alone, existed and was, perhaps, present in the mind of Elizabeth. In order to intervene decisively, it would have been necessary to send a strong military force to the Continent, and therefore to create a standing army. Had this been done, it would have been a retrograde movement, detrimental to all the true interests of the country. England would have abandoned the pursuit of her destiny on the seas in favour of a vain and suicidal attempt to become a great military power. And the Stuarts would have had the army for which they longed; an army probably with traditions of victory to assist it, for Protestantism was the winning cause; an army, at any rate, ready and able to secure the success of its leader; an army which might well have made Charles I. absolute, and prepared the way for a French Revolution in England. But whether Elizabeth foresaw something of all this, or whether she was actuated by lower motives—her love of economy and natural moderation—at least

she refused to enter upon a vigorous military policy and practically confined active operations to the sea. There the English sailors gained many a success; the ports of the south and west coast were filled with the treasure ships from Mexico and Peru; the rich American colonies feared the daring robbers who burst upon them when least expected, and almost the only defeat sustained, when the gallant Sir Richard Grenville lost his life, was more glorious than a victory. The naval power of England grew greater and greater; her commerce spread far and wide, and before the end of the reign the foundations, slight though they were, of the greatest colonial empire ever seen had been laid. And to Elizabeth much praise is due, whether she acted by accident or design; for at least she did much to turn the minds of her subjects to the ocean, rather than to the Continent, and thus, indirectly perhaps, but none the less certainly, to contribute in no small measure to the success of the Great Rebellion and to the preservation of the liberties of her country.

The last years of the reign were occupied by the rivalry between Essex and Robert Cecil. The former was the successor of Leicester in the favour of the queen and advocated a military policy; while the latter inherited his father's position and contended that the future of England lay on the seas. And as in the earlier years of her reign, Elizabeth's heart was with her favourite, but her mind was with her minister; and as Burleigh had triumphed over Leicester, so did his son over Essex. A rebellion, which broke out in Ireland under Hugh O'Neill (1598), assumed danger-

ous proportions; it was a revolt of the "wild Irish" against the centralising and organising policy of Elizabeth, and was only crushed with difficulty. Cecil took the opportunity which this revolt afforded to rid himself of his rival, under pretence of promoting him, and agreed to his appointment to the command of the army sent against O'Neill. But Essex made a treaty with the rebels which the government would not confirm; and, smarting under the implied censure, he returned home without leave, only to be disgraced. The triumph of Cecil was completed by the imprudence of his rival, who made an insane attempt to recover his position by force, was arrested and executed (1601). Two years later, the great queen, who mourned her favourite and repented having consented to his death, passed away, also having signified her approval of the choice of James VI. of Scotland as her successor.

The character of Elizabeth, a strange mixture of good and ill, of weakness and strength, may be regarded as being, so to speak, compounded from those of her father, grandfather, and mother. Her womanly side resembled that of Anne Boleyn. She was vain, fond of adulation, and capricious; while her deep-seated hatred to the idea of growing old, which caused her to shrink from naming an heir, and to dance as energetically as ever until illness confined her to her room, was distinctly feminine. From her mother, also, she inherited her somewhat doubtful morality and that vivacity which led her into more or less serious indiscretions. Like Henry VII. she was cautious and parsimonious; she pre-

ferred diplomacy to war and grudged every sovereign which she had to spend. Even in the great crisis caused by the coming of the Armada, when everything was at stake, she attempted to economise in the granting of supplies to her fleet, and she quarrelled with Hawkins at an earlier date because he failed in a venture in which she had taken a share. Like the first of the Tudor monarchs, too, she was very unscrupulous; caring nothing for promises, if her interest urged her to break them, and always ready to lie if the truth seemed likely to inconvenience her; and, like him, she inclined to be an opportunist and to procrastinate, in the hope that some accident might save her the trouble of coming to a definite decision. From Henry VIII. she inherited that strong will, which could bear nothing in the nature of a contradiction; that courage which enabled her to face even the secret danger of assassination without shrinking; that capacity for choosing able ministers; and that ability for ruling men, which never deserted her. Elizabeth was a great queen, and it was not altogether without reason that the compilers of the preface of the Authorised Version styled her "that bright Occidental Star Queen Elizabeth, of most happy memory." But, to a certain extent, she was indebted for her success to her ministers, and it is a fallacy to regard her as altogether great. From her determination to enforce her will, she was many times led to acts of tyranny; her caution sometimes degenerated into mere vacillation; her diplomacy became lying; and her moderation in religion passed into intolerance. Yet her reign was glorious and

successful; her name must ever rank high among those of the queens of history, and, in short, the good in her character counterbalanced the bad.

Elizabeth's nature is illustrated in a curious way in her constant negotiations with a view to marriage. Her suitors came from all parts of the world and were men of the most varying character. The empty-headed Arran was suggested by the Anglophil party in Scotland; the Archduke Charles was put forward by the party in England which desired to pacify Spain and the Catholics. "Froggie" Anjou "would a-wooing go whether his mother would let him or no"; he was favoured by the Huguenots and their friends, but unmercifully ridiculed by the wits of the time in those verses, which are now one of the best-known nursery rhymes. The mad Czar, Ivan the Terrible, offered to share his throne with the English queen, in competition with Eric of Sweden, who sent a cask of nails by way of delighting his proposed bride. With all these, Elizabeth played for a time, but eventually would have none of them. One man, perhaps, she might have married, the Earl of Leicester, who figures so largely in the Baconian theory of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays. But the native good sense of the queen saved her from such an act of folly, and as for the rest, they merely served to gratify her vanity or to help her in her foreign policy by enabling her to play off one country against another. Her mind could not endure the idea of subjection to the will of another, and she was not sufficiently warm-hearted to be carried away in spite of herself.

QUEEN ELIZABETH (1533–1603).

From an engraving by William Rogers.

The tyranny into which her strong will oftentimes led her is shown in her dealings with the Church and with Parliament. As has been seen, the persecution of the Catholics was in its inception largely political, but it acquired a religious character. Despite the sacrifices which the believers in the older creed had made at the time of the Armada, they were treated, if possible, with greater rigour after that date than they had been before, and for this latter severity there can be no justification, since the patriotism and loyalty of the Catholics could be no longer called in question. But Elizabeth displayed no more toleration for those who deviated from her "*via media*" in the opposite direction. During the evil times of the Marian terror, numbers of English Reformers had taken refuge on the Continent and had mostly congregated at Geneva. And, when they returned on the death of their persecutor, they were strongly imbued with Calvinistic doctrines and were by no means disposed to regard the Elizabethan religious settlement as final. But the queen had as little sympathy with this extreme as with the other, and before long the Protestant dissentients felt her heavy hand. They were thus led to attack the whole system of the Established Church; they protested against the remnants of "Popish superstitions"; they declared against any trifling with the "Scarlet Woman"; and they advocated the abolition of episcopacy; while in such scurrilous productions as the "Martin Marprelate Tracts" they endeavoured to popularise their views. At the beginning of the reign, Elizabeth had entrusted the exercise of her

authority as Supreme Head of the Church to a new court, that of High Commission, the procedure of which, despite the observance of the formalities of law, was such as to ensure that the Crown should almost invariably obtain a judgment in its favour. To this body, the task of punishing the Puritans was now entrusted, and so well did it do its work that few of the extreme reformers were able to preserve their connection with the Church without doing violence to their consciences. Contrary to the whole spirit of the Constitution, an oath was drawn up (1583) based upon the Canon Law, which was administered to all who were thought to hold Calvinistic views; failure to take it resulted in deprivation or other penalties, and, at the same time, numbers of persons were prosecuted for the publication of attacks upon the existing system and punished in every way short of being put to death. The English Church, indeed, ceased to preserve her boasted mean; she still occupied a middle position, but she permitted no one to stand on the one side or the other, and, abandoning her former moderation, she became a persecuting body. And, while she thus negatived the very principle upon which her justification rested, she caused, by her dogmatic conduct, the formation of new sects. Conventicles sprang up, and the prohibitions of the government and the anathemas of the bishops alike failed to stay the growth of Nonconformity.

As they were the advocates of liberty of opinion in the Church, so the Puritans were also the supporters of political freedom in Parliament. At first

sight, it is a little curious that, though they possessed a majority in the Commons throughout the reign, they should have done so little, and that their opposition should have been so comparatively ineffective. But the reason is not far to seek. Elizabeth was immensely popular, and anger at her tyrannical conduct was soothed by the feeling of deep gratitude to her for the ability with which she guided the State, and by the recognition of the fact that strong government was still the first necessity of the country. Rarely has any sovereign enjoyed such loyalty as did she; a loyalty which could induce a man like Sir John Hawkins to do violence to his sense of honour by turning spy, which could cause the very victims of her tyranny to pray for her prosperity even as they suffered. And this personal devotion prevented the Commons from steadfastly opposing her wishes, and led them to acquiesce in her cavalier treatment of all who dared to oppose her sovereign will. At the same time, the strong Court party was formed by the creation of rotten boroughs, a practice which had begun under Edward VI. and Mary, and which was so freely used by Elizabeth that during her reign over sixty places received enfranchisement and returned nominees of the Crown. Elizabeth's policy was to compel the Commons to confine their attention to ordinary business, to the registration of her decrees, and to carrying out her wishes. They were forbidden to touch upon the question of the succession, and roundly rebuked for daring to ask her to marry; they were not allowed to initiate reforms or alterations in ecclesiastical matters, and the unhappy Mr.

Cope was imprisoned for introducing his "Bill and Book" (1588), advocating a revision of the system of Church government; and they were informed that they talked too much, and that their freedom of speech merely consisted in the right of consenting or dissenting. And it was not until the very last years of the reign that any successful resistance was made to the queen's wishes. Then, however, the Commons forced her to abandon the practice of granting monopolies (1601), grants of the exclusive right to manufacture certain articles, which had become a crying evil. This sudden determination may be attributed to the rise of a new generation, who had no longer that admiration for the queen which had characterised their fathers, and to that feeling of discontent which a long reign seems always to cause in a greater or less degree, and which makes long-lived monarchs unpopular in their old age. But, at the same time, the opposition had really been constantly growing in strength; the protest against arbitrary conduct became more vigorous, and there were increasing signs that the days of personal monarchy were numbered. It must be noted, also, that, while Elizabeth ruled nearly absolutely, while she issued proclamations, which were in effect laws, and while her political opponents suffered punishment for their independence without being allowed to avail themselves of the common law, yet all these acts were allowed under protest only. The Commons objected to the infringement of their privileges, and even vindicated them successfully, though not against the Crown, and the judges asserted their

independence by remonstrating against the constant practice of committing people to prison on the warrant of the queen or of the Privy Council for offences unknown to the law of the land. In short, while the period is marked by many illegalities and much arbitrary rule, it is marked also by a growing sense of liberty. Under Henry VIII. the acts of the Crown passed unquestioned; under Elizabeth they did not. The nation was preparing for the struggle; the clouds had gathered, and the storm was ready to burst as soon as an unpopular monarch succeeded—or rather as soon as the great queen was dead.

Allusion has already been made to the material prosperity of this period, which resulted partly from the opening up of new trade routes and partly from the increased national vigour. The reformation of the coinage, which had become greatly depreciated during the last twenty years, was one of the earliest acts of the reign, and its completion gave much greater stability to commercial undertakings, since the foreign merchants regained confidence. And the increased commerce of the country was shown by many outward signs. This was the time when the first chartered trading companies were founded; the Turkey Company and the Russian Company date from the Tudor period, and the close of Elizabeth's reign saw the beginning of the greatest of all undertakings of this kind, the East India Company. In one way these institutions did, perhaps, tend to hamper trade, since their charters expressly excluded English competition; but, on the whole, their creation was beneficial, since they gave organisation to effort,

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

SIR THOMAS GRESHAM (? 1519–1579).

From the painting by Sir Antonio More in the National Portrait Gallery.

and they were able to influence the government much more than private traders would have been able to do. At the same time the foundation of Trinity Houses helped to secure ships against the dangers resulting from ignorance of the coast or the bad condition of harbours. Improvements were effected at the chief ports, and the custom of providing pilots arose, while before long the erection of lighthouses began. All such works were greatly encouraged by the patronage of the Tudor sovereigns. The foundation of the Royal Exchange by Sir Thomas Gresham was the outcome of the increased trade of London, and assisted in encouraging merchants to resort to that city; while the old custom of contracting loans abroad was abandoned in favour of that of raising them in England. And Elizabeth, despite her parsimony, did not wholly neglect the navy; she kept about forty vessels in constant pay, and whereas, in former reigns, ships had been hired abroad, the growth of shipbuilding now obviated the necessity of seeking for them in foreign lands. From her reign the English navy increased slowly but surely, though it was still composed of ships of an inferior type, and occasionally suffered seriously from temporary neglect.

Nor was the prosperity of the time confined to commercial and trading circles. The agricultural depression, which had been so great a feature of the period immediately preceding this, was to a great extent removed by the introduction of superior methods of cultivation; more labourers were required on the farms, and there was a marked revival in the

rural population. Moreover this was, in some ways, the golden age of Cornish mining; the industry had, indeed, existed long before, but copper was now discovered, and thus the value of the mines and the number of men employed in them were greatly increased. At the same time, manufactures began to spread. Religious persecution drove many Huguenots out of France; Elizabeth welcomed them to England, and they not only set an excellent example of application and perseverance, but also raised the standard of existence, and brought in with them new branches of industry. The manufacture of linen and silk was introduced, that of woollen goods was much improved and far more widely extended, and perhaps the solitary instance of depression was found in the iron trade, which was unfavourably affected by the decrease of wood, still the only fuel for smelting the ore. Upon all industries the important Statute of Apprentices had a great influence (1563). That influence was bad in so far that, by requiring a seven years' apprenticeship, it lessened the mobility of labour, but it was good in that it tended to prevent the production of inferior goods, and led to each man seeking that part of the country which was best fitted for the exercise of his particular calling.

The great centres of wealth were still mainly in the south, as they had been from time immemorial; but there are signs that the North and Midlands also shared in the general prosperity, if not of the ultimate change in the relative importance of the two. Thus we find that Leeds is already "much enriched

by its woollen manufacture"; that Halifax is noted for its cloth trade, Manchester for its cottons, and Liverpool for its populousness, while Birmingham is "swarming with inhabitants and echoing with the noise of anvils, for here are great numbers of smiths." In short, the new towns continued to rise at the expense of the old, and the places which are now noted for their wealth and importance began to grow great at this time. The appearance of the rural districts, too, was changed by the springing up of those magnificent houses which are still to be seen all over England, and which were built in the style of architecture to which Elizabeth's name has been attached. The nobility ceased to live in the old castles, already shorn of much of their splendour by the abolition of the hosts of retainers who lent distinction to them. The value of these fortresses was much reduced by the introduction of artillery; their owners ceased to desire a stronghold from which they might defy the whole force of the realm, while the new men who bought lands were equally devoid of the old spirit of lawlessness. They now sought comfort rather than security, and, in short, became country gentlemen rather than nobles, and they formed the class which supplied the Justices of the Peace who became so important during the Tudor period.

Although it resulted from other causes, the great distress of the Reformation era had been much aggravated by the dissolution of the religious houses. The poor had now nowhere to turn for relief; the laity were indifferent, and the clergy were themselves

very often in need of charity, and generally incapable of assisting others. There was no organised system for dealing with the ever-pressing problem of the unemployed ; the course which was adopted was to punish "sturdy beggars" for not working, when it was frequently the case that, with the best will in the world, they could find no work to do. But the crying nature of the evil led at last to the adoption of measures for meeting it, and the Poor Law of Elizabeth was the result (1601). By it the relief of the needy was entrusted to each parish, a rate was to be levied and to be administered by from four to two "Overseers," who were to find work for such as were able-bodied and to maintain the rest. The Act was by no means perfect, either in its conception or in its working, and it resulted in many abuses, especially owing to the anxiety of every parish to shift the burden of supporting the indigent as far as possible from its own shoulders. But, at the same time, there was at last a system, and any system was, perhaps, better than none at all.

The Poor Law has also another kind of importance. A new unit was taken for purposes of local administration, the ecclesiastical parish. Ever since the manorial courts had begun to decline the parish meeting, or the vestry, as it came to be called, had continued to increase in importance. Originally assembled purely to decide matters connected with the Church, it had very early in its history begun to concern itself with everything connected with the well-being of the parishioners, through the influence of the parish priests, who undertook the champion-

ship of their flocks against the baronial wolves. And now its existence was, so to speak, legalised ; certain duties were entrusted to it by Parliament, and it acquired a permanent place in the system of local administration. At the same time the appointment of the new "overseers" was entrusted to the Justices of the Peace, to whom the Tudors had given new importance by charging them with the major part of the local administration—or, more correctly, with its supervision. And as these justices were nominated by the Lords Lieutenant, who were in turn appointed by the Crown, and also had already assumed the functions formerly belonging to the sheriffs, local government was brought into much closer relationship with the central power. The result was twofold : local institutions benefited from the increased organisation, and their new vitality reacted upon Parliament, which was thus better fitted for the task of defending the liberties of the whole country.

It remains to notice one more event, or series of events—in some ways the most interesting and important in the whole reign—the first English attempt at colonisation. After his voyage along the north-eastern coasts of America, in search of the North-West Passage, Frobisher conceived the idea of attempting to form a permanent settlement on the newly-discovered shores, but his efforts were defeated by the severity of the climate and the almost complete absence of gold, which afforded the primary incentive to all colonisation at that time. A subsequent attempt by Sir Humphrey Gilbert had no more success. He did, indeed, formally annex Newfound-

Sir WALTER RALEIGH Kn.
Captain of the Queens Guard Lord Warden
of the Stannaries Lieutenant Generall of the
County of Cornwall Governor of the
Ile of Jersey &c.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH (? 1552–1618).

From Vertue's engraving of a contemporary picture at Knole.

land, and established a colony on the coast of Labrador (1576), but here again the cold was too great for the English settlers, and in addition, the natives were very hostile. Neither of these schemes ever became, as a matter of fact, much more than an idea, and the emigrants were only too glad to return home. But the project of colonisation found a fresh advocate in Raleigh, who was perhaps actuated principally by a desire to dispute the arrogant claims of the Spaniards and Portuguese to the dominion of the New World. He obtained a charter from Elizabeth, and, four years before the coming of the Armada, sent out an expedition, which was directed to attempt a settlement in a more southerly direction. Having reached the coast of Florida, they sailed northwards along the shores until they reached what is now Raleigh Bay, in the neighbourhood of Cape Hatteras. Here they found a safe anchorage in Pamlico Sound, and upon one of those islands, Ocracoke, which protect the harbour from the Atlantic, the first English settlement in America which had any claim to a permanent character was established (1584). For a while all went well with the infant colony, to which, in honour of the queen, the name Virginia was applied ; but presently the friendship of the natives was lost owing to the indiscretion of Sir Richard Grenville, who led a further expedition to the district. He attempted to extend the colony to the mainland, and, in doing so, unfortunately quarrelled with the existing population, the settlers having formed an idea that the natives were concealing the gold which they supposed to be

plentiful in the district. For a while the settlements, including one on Roanoke Island further north, continued to struggle on, but in face of the local hostility and the lack of consistent support from England, their position was hopeless. The ultimate fate of the colonists is unknown ; they probably fell victims to the enmity of the Indians, and were either massacred or starved to death ; but the miserable survivors of the Ocracoke settlement were rescued and brought home by Drake, after having lived for something over two years on the American coast. One more attempt at colonisation was made before the death of the queen. Bartholomew Gosnold sailed to the shores of the future New England, but he also failed, and the only immediate result of all the efforts to establish colonies was the introduction into England of the potato and of tobacco, which were found in Virginia. But the idea of settling the coast of America remained, and in these various attempts may be found the first beginnings of the greatest of all Republics, and of the British Colonial Empire ; those two creations of the Anglo-Saxon genius which have had, and still have, such a profound influence in the world. It is not without reason that the capital of North Carolina perpetuates the name of Sir Walter Raleigh, for though he actually failed, yet he practically originated a movement which has changed the history of mankind. Spanish colonisation merely tended to perpetuate in a New, all the evils of the Old World ; to spread despotism and moral, intellectual, and social degradation. But Raleigh, and those who followed in his steps, found a new

land, where political and religious liberty might flourish; where men might worship God in their own way, and govern themselves according to their own desires. At a time when intolerance in Church and State appeared to be gaining the victory, the lovers of freedom found a fresh home in the New World, whence, at a much later date, their descendants returned to fight and to die to secure for the people of the older states the blessings which they themselves enjoyed.

The reign of Elizabeth is, in some measure, an intermediate period; during it the royal power reached its highest point, and during it also the last struggle between prerogative and liberty began. Under the Tudor sovereigns, the Monarchy, as has been seen, acquired a position of very great strength, and was able to commit many illegalities. And the last of that dynasty was, perhaps, more like an absolute ruler than any other king or queen of England. In every branch of the national life the royal power made itself felt. The Lords, temporal and spiritual alike, were willingly submissive; the Commons were bullied into obedience, and everywhere resistance was punished through the joint instrumentality of the two courts of Star Chamber and High Commission. By means of the Councils, created under Henry VIII., and by the establishment of courts-martial in other districts, a very large part of the country was practically deprived of the benefits both of the constitution and of the Common Law, while both these were infringed or modified through the medium of royal proclamations and of

commitment to prison on royal warrant alone. A political and religious creed was promulgated under the sanction of the Crown ; the subject who dared to question it did so at his peril, and the oath "*ex officio*" (1583) seemed to establish an inquisition into the very hearts of men. But through it all the constitution remained unchanged. The office of Lord High Admiral is at the present time, and for many years has been, placed in commission ; but its revival could be accomplished without any change in the constitution. And so under the Tudor sovereigns the Commons had placed their power, as it were, in commission, but they reserved to themselves the right to resume it as soon as ever they deemed it advisable to do so, and to take again the same position as they had occupied in Lancastrian times, when their power was at its highest. The very fact that the existence of the instruments, through which the royal authority was exercised, was sanctioned by Parliament, proves that there was no despotism, for a despot acts according to his own will alone, and knows no controlling or sanctioning power. Again, the protests which were from time to time made in Parliament, however ineffective they might be, prove that the theory of the limitations on monarchy remained intact. Even Elizabeth herself recognised this, since, in declaring that certain subjects were outside the province of the Commons, she tacitly admitted that certain other subjects were within that province. The contemporary writers, moreover, are unanimous in declaring that the government of England is not an absolute monarchy ; and Hooker, Harrison, and Camden are

at one in asserting that Parliament is the ultimate, the supreme authority in the realm. The theory, at least, of the time is clear. As one of these authors says, Parliament "has a supreme and over-ruling authority in making, confirming, repealing, and explaining laws; reversing atteinders, determining causes of more than ordinary difficulty between subject and subject; and, to be short, in all things which either concern the state in general or any particular person."

But to say that the constitution remained theoretically intact, though in itself enough to free the Tudor monarchy from the charge of being, strictly speaking, a despotism, is only a half truth. As a matter of fact, substantial progress was made during this period towards the establishment of real liberty, that is, towards the admission of the bulk of the people to the enjoyment of political power and to a preponderating share in the government. It has been already suggested that the nobles and the Church were the most vigorous and dangerous enemies of popular freedom. Their boasted services to the cause of political progress have been greatly over-estimated; almost the best that can be truly said of them is that they prevented the establishment of an absolute monarchy, and that they secured certain legal rights for the mass of the people. And a very sharp distinction must be drawn between legal rights and true liberty. In England at the present day the dumb animals may be said to possess legal rights, since cruelty to them is punishable by law, but they certainly have no liberty. And, just as the dumb

animals cannot themselves enforce the observance of the law against cruelty, so the mass of the people, being also politically inarticulate, could not do so in England until the Crown gave them voices by the creation of Parliament. This new creation was not favoured by the nobles or by the Church. And even when the permanency of Parliament was finally established, it was dominated by the great men—the representatives, generally speaking, representing not the people, but the *clientèle* of the nobles. Thus the first step towards true liberty of the people was the destruction of the monopoly of political power enjoyed by the great men. And this was accomplished under the Tudors, for the policy of Henry VII. destroyed the power of the temporal peers, and the Reformation that of the spiritual.

And when this had been done, the next step was to create a body of men sufficiently numerous and powerful to supply independent representatives. This also was accomplished under the Tudor rule. The good order which was maintained, and the warm encouragement given by the sovereigns to industry and commerce, led to a greater distribution of wealth ; and upon this was laid the foundation of the great middle class. And that class supplied a Hampden, a Pym, and a Cromwell ; it undertook henceforth the championship of the cause of liberty. At the same time, the Tudors educated this class—a necessary work in order that when the representatives reached the House of Commons they should have some experience in government, and should not, like their predecessors in Lancastrian times, fail through

ignorance. Their political education was accomplished by the training which they received in local government, all the branches of which were organised and given a new vitality by the care of the Tudors. And so, when the time came, the Commons were able to offer effective resistance to the Stuarts, to conduct a war, and to assume the whole government of the state.

In short, so far from being a time of reaction and of despotism, the Tudor period was a time of real progress, during which the liberty of the country was placed upon a more certain basis, since its preservation was entrusted to a larger class of people, and during which the men were trained who were to undertake the defence of that liberty against a most powerful assailant. Before the close of the reign of Elizabeth the work of preparation had been completed, and the growing independence of the Commons, which then appears, was not despite the Tudor rule, but the result of it. When, in conjunction with this positive work for liberty, the negative work of the Tudors is considered—their adoption of a rational foreign policy and their failure to create a standing army, as they might have done—then it must be acknowledged that, after all, Henry VII., Henry VIII., and Elizabeth, deserve a place little inferior to that of Edward I. in the roll of "constitutional heroes." So far from their government having to bear the blame for the Stuart assaults upon liberty, it made resistance to those assaults possible, and did much to ensure the success of that resistance.

X

THE THEORY OF DIVINE RIGHT

(1603–1640)

THERE could hardly have been a greater contrast between two rulers than that which existed between Elizabeth and her immediate successor. James was uncouth, untidy, and unwashed; there was no dignity either in his gait or in his manners; his language was coarse, his behaviour was effeminate, and his accent broad. Hitherto England, whatever the faults of her sovereigns might have been, had at least been ruled by men and women who were kings and queens in appearance; now she was given over to the governance of one who was better fitted, on the surface, to perform the part of a clown at a village pantomime. But, at the same time, the first Stuart had considerable ability. He was well-educated and was no mean theologian; he possessed that native shrewdness which is generally characteristic of the Scotch; and he was endowed with a certain homely wit which enabled him to make occasionally apt retorts and sometimes to sum up a question in a telling phrase.

Unfortunately for himself, these very advantages tended to disqualify him for his position, since, while aspiring to be an English Justinian and to attain religious unity by argument, his very skill in debate led him to champion a side, and equally his real cleverness enabled him to convince himself that his mission in Europe was to be the peacemaker of the Continent. Supremely confident in his own wisdom, he became a mere tool in the hands of flattering prelates and clever diplomatists; Spain and the Episcopate bowed to his great mind openly while secretly leading him whithersoever they would; and the combination of acuteness and obtuseness which made up his character prevented him from seeing that he was simply serving the ends of those whom he aspired to guide. In addition, the wealth and the apparent absolutism of Elizabeth had made a great impression upon James, who had been restricted in pocket and in power at home, and he hoped to find in his new kingdom an inexhaustible mine of gold, of which he could dispose at will.

Such was the monarch who came to the throne at a time when the people were ready to assert their liberty and when the rival factions were ready to engage in open conflict. The position of the monarchy could only be secured and internal unity could only be preserved by the exercise of great tact and excessive caution; and neither the one nor the other had any place in the character of James. In any case a struggle was, perhaps, inevitable, and the new king was most admirably fitted to precipitate it. At first, indeed, all parties joined in welcoming

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

KING JAMES I. (1566–1625).

From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery.

him, but this was only because each party hoped that he would become its own champion. The Catholics took courage from his published writings and from his former leaning towards an alliance with the Guises; the Puritans relied upon a continuance in England of the toleration which he had extended in Scotland to the Presbyterians, and the middle party, the Established Church, trusted that he would observe the maxims of Elizabeth. But his earliest acts showed that the hopes of the third section were alone well founded, and the retention of Cecil as chief minister was regarded by the extremists as equivalent to a declaration against themselves. And so, before he had been a year in England, James was called upon to meet two plots, one of which—the "Main Plot"—was apparently directed principally to change the ministry; the other—the "Bye Plot"—to seize the king's person and compel the granting of the desires of the rival parties. The first was supported by Spain and headed by Lord Cobham and Raleigh; the second was organised by a combination of Catholics and Puritans. Both were revealed to Cecil; the minister treated them as one, and their only result was to secure him in power (1603).

Before long, however, James gave a fresh cause of offence to his new subjects. On his way south from Scotland he had consented to receive a petition, to which the name "Millenary" was attached—since it purported to set forth the views of a thousand of the clergy—and which prayed for certain changes in the Prayer Book in the direction of Puritanism. Pleased

with the prospect of being able to exhibit his theological learning, the king directed that members of both parties should assemble at Hampton Court and there attempt to arrange their differences in his presence, while he would act as judge. But when the Conference was held (1604), the Puritan delegates rashly advocated the abolition of Episcopacy. James had suffered in Scotland from the independence of the Presbyterians, who had used their pulpits to attack his political administration, and, fearing that the same condition of affairs might be established in England, he threw himself into the arms of the High Church party, summing up his opinion in the famous phrase "No bishop, no king." The only outcome of the meeting was the Authorised Version of the Bible, the compilation of which was now begun by the royal command. Far from gaining any real concessions, the Puritans began to suffer more severely than before, James declaring that he would "harry them out of the land" if they refused to submit. As a result, he alienated a very large section of the people, and his attempt to conciliate them by an equally severe persecution of the Catholics merely made matters worse. A few of the more extreme members of that party, indeed, combined together in a fresh conspiracy, the notorious "Gunpowder Treason and Plot" (1605). Led by Guy Fawkes, a Spaniard of good birth, they hired a cellar under the House of Lords and filled it with gunpowder and fuel with the intention of blowing up the king and Parliament. A timely warning saved the government and led to even more vigorous measures against the

Catholics, but it brought no relief to the Protestant sectaries.

The growing dissatisfaction, evidenced at this time not only in the formation of plots, but also in the continual protests of the Commons and of individuals, was greatly increased after the death of Cecil. James had wisely retained that minister and had created him Earl of Salisbury, leaving to him the real management of the State. As a result, a comparatively popular policy had been followed, while the undoubted ability of Cecil, despite a certain servility which also marked him, is shown by the inextricable confusion into which the government fell after his death (1612). The king henceforth relied upon personal favourites, to whom he gave every honour and all power. Of these the first was Robert Carr, a Scotchman, who was successively created Earl of Rochester, a Knight of the Garter, and Earl of Somerset. His fall was caused by the suspicious death of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which both he and his wife were accused of being concerned. The countess was almost certainly responsible for the murder, but the whole truth of the matter was never revealed, and it is possible that the king was himself as guilty as his favourite. In any case, however, Somerset was exiled from Court, and George Villiers took his place (1616). Upon him James lavished honours even more liberally than he had done upon Carr, and in a few years he eventually received the title under which he is best known—that of Duke of Buckingham. The sole merit—if this was a merit —of these favourites was that they were possessed

of more or less considerable personal beauty. For ruling England they had neither the energy nor the capacity, and, while the extravagance of the king in heaping wealth upon them caused much anger, his effeminate fondness for them created a general feeling of contempt. Accustomed, as they had been, to the dignity and strong-mindedness of Elizabeth, Englishmen felt almost horror, certainly repulsion and loathing, for the king, whose principal business seemed to be to tidy his favourites' clothes and exhibit towards them a maudlin affection, which would have disgraced a proud mother if shown to an only child.

James was equally unfortunate in his attitude upon questions of foreign policy. After their initial successes the Reformers had begun to lose ground all over Europe, for they were divided among themselves by disputes upon abstract theology and were assaulted from without by the Society of Jesus—the most formidable organisation ever devoted to the cause of Catholicism. In the south, Protestantism was almost entirely extinguished ; in France, Henry IV. had secured his throne by an opportune recantation, and, although the Huguenots were tolerated, they ceased to make progress ; in the Low Countries, the practical independence of the United Provinces was to a great extent counterbalanced by the reversion of Belgium to the older creed ; and in South Germany and in Poland there appeared a general reaction against the Reformation. To Englishmen it seemed that the work of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin was destined to be undone, and the inveterate

hostility to Spain—the result of years of warfare—was intensified by the fear of an European combination to restore the old order in England. Under these circumstances the pro-Spanish policy of the king was regarded almost in the light of treason to the nation. James was led to look favourably upon Spain by various motives, of which the principal were his admiration for the strongly monarchical government of that country and gratitude for the sympathetic attitude of Philip II. towards himself during the troublous years of his reign in Scotland. As long as Cecil was supreme, indeed, the policy of the late queen was continued, and if a necessary peace was made with Philip III. the attitude of England was defined by the marriage of Elizabeth Stuart to the Protestant Frederic, Elector Palatine of the Rhine (1613); by the negotiation of an alliance between Henry, Prince of Wales, and a French princess, who was to be educated in the Reformed religion; and by the despatch of troops for the support of the Protestant Union in Germany. But as soon as the minister was dead James gave free rein to his own ideas, and prepared to substitute a close connection with Spain for the existing doubtful peace. The unhappy Arabella Stuart, a descendant of Margaret Tudor and the wife of William Seymour, the representative of the Suffolk claim, was imprisoned (1611), and Sir Walter Raleigh was executed (1618) in order to please the Spanish government, while, on the death of Prince Henry, negotiations had been set on foot for the marriage of Prince Charles, the only surviving son of James

ARABELLA STUART (1575–1615).

From an engraving by George Humble.

and the Infanta Maria, a daughter of Philip III. So much did this idea appeal to the English king that it contributed to colour the whole of his foreign policy, and while the vast majority of his subjects were eager for him to intervene in the Protestant interest in the great conflict of the Thirty Years' War, he hoped to obtain the restoration of his fugitive son-in-law by means of mediation, and as a compensation for the great honour which he proposed to confer upon the Spanish royal house. Consequently he gave Frederic much bad advice, with the best intentions possible, assured him of the pacific and gentle character of his enemies, and acquiesced in the sequestration of the Palatinate, on the verbal assurance of Gondomar that its restoration would be the dowry of the Infanta. But in England the royal policy was regarded as a base desertion of the cause of Protestantism, and as Tilly and Spinola gained success after success and expelled Frederic from Bohemia and from his hereditary dominions, James became more and more unpopular.

Meanwhile, from the very beginning of the reign, the relations between the king and Parliament had been more or less strained. In the initial session the Commons had asserted their privileges, declaring them, in their "Form of Apology," to exist by right, not favour, and at the same time hinting to James that he would not be treated with that consideration which had marked their dealings with Elizabeth. So persistent were they in the presentation of grievances that the king determined to attempt to rule without a parliament, and by means of "Imposi-

tions," or customs duties, to raise the necessary revenue. He was fortified by a favourable verdict from the judges in the case of John Bates (1606), who had refused payment, and he issued a "Book of Rates" systematising his exactions. But the insufficiency of the income derived from these sources soon compelled him to call upon the Commons once more, whereupon he was met with fresh protests against not only the "Impositions," but also against the arbitrary conduct of the Court of High Commission. A proposal to settle all disputes by fixing an annual income for the king—the so-called "Great Contract" (1609)—which was brought forward by Cecil, came to nothing. The judges summoned up enough courage to declare that the royal prerogative was limited by law in the matter of proclamations, by which the king had trenched upon the liberties of the subject; an attempt to secure a favourable House of Commons by means of the "Undertakers"—men who would "undertake" to support the Crown—failed, and James dissolved the "Addled Parliament" before it had passed a single measure, and for six years ruled alone. But the people were now roused to resistance also; the unconstitutional demands of the king were refused and the sums collected were far too small for satisfactory government.

Recognising, therefore, that he would be obliged eventually to call another parliament, James devoted his attention meanwhile to the work of strengthening as far as possible his position, in view of the inevitable struggle. And he saw that a subservient bench of judges would be of very great assistance to him, by

enabling him to appeal to the authority of the law with the certainty of a favourable answer. But the then Chief Justice (Sir Edward Coke), who had been useful to the Crown while Attorney-General, now showed signs of a disposition to resist the illegal acts of the king, and finally openly declared that Peacham, who had written but not published an assertion that James was unworthy to rule, was not guilty of high treason. From the royal point of view he was thus quite unsuited for his position, and it was important that he should be removed. An opportunity was afforded by the case of "Commendams," in which a suit was brought against Niele, Bishop of Lichfield, for holding a living, which James had granted him, at the same time as his bishopric. It was argued by the prosecution that the living was not in the gift of the Crown, and that, even had it been, the circumstances under which it was held made the occupancy illegal. When the case came before the judges, the king sent word that the hearing should be suspended until he had given his own views upon it. The whole bench, acting upon Coke's advice, resolved to pay no attention to this order; James demanded an apology and recantation, and when the Chief Justice refused to give a satisfactory answer he was dismissed (1616). By this action the Crown made a distinct advance towards arbitrary power; henceforth the judges held their offices on the understanding that they would be discharged if they dared to cross the royal will, and, as a result, the whole machinery of the law could be used in defence of the most advanced ideas of the prerogative. The

effect is seen in the uniform way in which every act of the Crown under Charles I. was ratified by the judges, and the independence of the bench was not regained until it was finally secured by a clause in the Act of Settlement. At the same time, any barristers who dared to defend persons accused by the government were severely punished.

When, however, Parliament did again meet, the Commons showed quite as much independence as before. Reviving their right of impeachment, which had fallen into desuetude since Lancastrian times, they procured the punishment of Sir Giles Mompesson and Sir Francis Mitchell, who had been holders of monopolies, for fraud and violence, and of the Lord Chancellor (Bacon), for accepting bribes from suitors in his court (1621). With regard to the Chancellor, the facts seem to show that he did not allow his decisions to be affected, and that he rather perpetuated an already existing practice, and it is to the credit of the king that he practically pardoned the most famous of all his subjects. But of greater immediate importance than these impeachments was the Protestation of the Commons (1621), wherein they declared that the liberties and powers of Parliament were of right; that Parliament should debate upon all affairs of national importance; that freedom of speech and choice of times for discussion of all subjects belonged to Parliament; and that any questions as to the behaviour of members should be primarily dealt with by the Commons. In effect, this Protestation summed up all the grievances of the reign, and was practically a declaration that the

Commons would no longer submit to the encroachments of the Crown. They had already petitioned against the Spanish match, and it was the abandonment of that project which led in the last year of the reign to a revival of popularity for the sovereign. Buckingham, indeed, who was regarded as responsible for the breaking off of the negotiations, became for a while a hero, and when James died, Charles ascended the throne with some prospect of meeting with general favour (1625).

But the new king very soon proved to be a far more dangerous enemy to the liberties of the country than his father had ever been. He possessed very considerable advantages over James. He was gracious and kindly in manner, handsome in personal appearance, irreproachable in his private life, devout in religious observances, and, in short, as a man, could inspire admiration, affection, and even devotion. At the same time, he had a most exaggerated idea of his position and of his prerogative; he was only too ready to accept the slavish maxims of his more extreme and servile courtiers, who endowed the royal office with attributes little short of Divine. And, possibly from these feelings, possibly from some constitutional defect, Charles had an extraordinary disregard for any undertakings which he might give in his public capacity; the only vow which he ever kept was that of marriage, and he was utterly incapable of dealing in a straightforward way with his subjects. A promise from him was worth nothing, if given as king, and, though he was undoubtedly anxious to do the best for his country, he

was equally determined that he would be a beneficent despot and not a constitutional sovereign. He appears, indeed, to have accepted the dangerous theory that there are two codes of morality—one for private individuals, one for monarchs; and he was, in short, the best man and the worst king who has ever sat upon the throne of England.

And with such a king there was little likelihood of any cessation of the conflict between Crown and Parliament; it is, indeed, not too much to say that the only possible ending, from the day of his accession, was the destruction of one party or the other. The slackness which characterised the preparations for the war with Spain, which had begun directly after the breaking off of the negotiations for alliance, and the unwise marriage treaty with France, involving as it did a partial toleration for Catholics, quickly combined to destroy the popularity of Charles and of Buckingham, and the attitude of the Commons was clearly shown in the refusal to grant tonnage and poundage for life, and in the niggardly subsidy which was offered. From this time until the meeting of the Long Parliament the history of the reign is a long record of strife between the two parties and of the failure of the royal attempt to rule unrestrictedly; of incapacity in the government, and of growing discontent among the people. Charles almost at once committed a serious mistake; he consented to lend ships to Richelieu, by whom they were utilised for the attack upon the Huguenot stronghold at Rochelle; and though the home government had possibly never intended that this should happen, they were regarded

as deliberately forwarding the cause of Catholicism. Despite the urgent messages of the king, who was deeply involved with the German Protestants, the Commons refused to grant supplies until grievances had been redressed, and the first Parliament of the reign was dissolved. Before the second Parliament met, Charles attempted to gain popularity by a spirited foreign policy. A large armament was despatched to Spain, but it was altogether unsuccessful. Its leader, Edward Cecil (Lord Wimbledon), was hopelessly incompetent; the soldiers, who were landed near Cadiz, only distinguished themselves by getting intoxicated, and the failure to take that town was followed by an equally futile effort to capture some American gold-ships (1625). Far from winning popularity for the king, the expedition merely served to irritate the people still more, partly owing to its complete failure, partly owing to the arbitrary manner in which the necessary supplies had been raised.

When, therefore, Parliament met, the Commons insisted more vigorously than ever upon the necessity of redress for their grievances, and appointed committees to inquire into abuses both in Church and State. They further began to attack Buckingham, and, despite the royal declaration that the minister had acted according to the king's wishes, and that therefore his doings ought not to be called in question, they proceeded to impeach him. Angry at this conduct, Charles again dissolved his Parliament, and made his first attempt to rule without one. To supply the necessary funds, tonnage and poundage were

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

SIR FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626).

From the painting by Paul Van Somer in the National Portrait Gallery.

levied, although they had not been granted, and all who resisted these and other exactions were summarily imprisoned. One of the victims, Darnel, sued out his writ of *habeas corpus*, but the judges held that the discretionary powers of the king allowed him to commit persons to prison without assigning any definite reason, and thus tacitly acknowledged that the same power permitted the levying of taxes without the consent of Parliament (1627). But the financial difficulties of Charles continued to increase, and while the war with Spain still went on he now injured his position still further by attacking France. Buckingham in person led an expedition to the relief of Rochelle, which was closely besieged by Richelieu; but he failed dismally, and the pecuniary necessities of the king became more pressing, while his unpopularity by no means decreased. He was now compelled to have recourse once more to Parliament, and to appeal to that body to grant him the supplies necessary for the conduct of the dual war. Despite every precaution, however, the elections went altogether against the government, and the first business to which the Houses devoted themselves when they met was the framing of a statement of their grievances. Together they drew up the famous Petition of Right, in which they protested against the late illegal exactions, arbitrary commitments, the billeting of soldiers, and the establishment of martial law, and to which they appended a request that reforms should be effected in these directions. Charles long hesitated as to whether he would receive the petition, but at last, seeing no other way of obtaining supplies,

and having been assured by the judges that he need not fear that he would be bound by it, he consented to allow it to be presented, and added to it the usual words of assent—"Let right be done as desired" (1628).

In tone this famous document, as Sir Henry Martyn asserted on behalf of the Commons at the time, was very moderate, being little more than an assertion of ancient rights and privileges which had been infringed by the king, and it might therefore have been hoped that Charles would in future refrain from the actions which had been thus reprobated. That he did not so refrain has been brought forward as one of the gravest charges against him, but there can be no real doubt that, whatever his moral obligations may have been, he was not bound in law. When he applied to the judges to know whether he would be unable henceforth to imprison persons at will, they answered that there was no danger of such a result, and they were legally right in this reply; for it is most important to note that the form of the document was that of a Petition, that no assent by the king could make it law, and that the reforms desired depended on the royal will alone, there being no doubt as to the perfect right of the Crown to act upon, or to refrain from acting upon, a Petition. Parliament, as a matter of fact, committed a great strategical blunder; in their anxiety to avoid any appearance of innovation, they contented themselves with an assertion of ancient rights, as they expressed it, and thus they in nowise reduced the royal prerogative. The reality even of some of the rights claimed depended upon

the document known as the *De Tallagio Non Concedendo*, the Latin version of Edward I.'s *Confirmatio Cartarum*, of which the authenticity was at least doubtful, having been denied or disregarded by the Plantagenet kings. Charles had, therefore, considerable, if not complete, legal justification for his subsequent conduct, and might claim some sort of moral justification also, when the Commons continued to put forward grievances, on the ground that by this action they had broken their bargain. For although they granted subsidies as soon as Charles had received the Petition of Right, they protested against the continued levying of tonnage and poundage without their consent, on the ground that these had been included under the general terms of the clause of the Petition dealing with illegal exactions, and, further, Buckingham was only saved from a fresh impeachment by the prorogation of the Houses.

During the recess, the duke was assassinated; but this caused no abatement in the vigour with which the Commons attacked various abuses. The arrest of one of the members for non-payment of tonnage and poundage led to a great outcry, and the king bowed before the storm to the extent of giving a verbal promise that he would not again exact the obnoxious duties. But other grievances were at once brought forward; the temper of the Commons was obviously against the court altogether, and the king attempted to quell opposition by repeated messages adjourning them. This conduct alarmed the leaders of the popular party. On an eventful day they refused to submit, and Holles and Valentine

forcibly held the Speaker down in his chair, while three resolutions which had been drawn up by Eliot were put to the House, declaring that all who brought in or favoured "Popish" practices in the Church, who held that tonnage and poundage might be levied without consent of Parliament, and who paid those duties, were enemies to the liberties of the country. While the soldiers of the royal guard were preparing to break open the doors of the House and expel the members by force, the resolutions were carried by acclamation; the Commons adjourned themselves, and a few days later, Parliament was dissolved, Charles having already imprisoned the leaders of the opposition, and being now fully resolved to rule alone (1629).

As has been mentioned, the king had already lost the assistance of Buckingham, who had fallen a victim to the fanatic patriotism of Felton at Portsmouth, where he was superintending the preparations for another expedition to Rochelle. Few men have attained to such a high position as did George Villiers, with such slight qualifications. His most notable achievements are the suggestion of the utterly senseless journey of Charles to Madrid, which resulted in the abandonment of the Spanish marriage scheme; the subsequent war with Spain, which led to the disgraceful failure at Cadiz; the alliance with Richelieu, which was altogether a political error; and the war with France, which surpassed even the alliance in stupidity. He had no great objects and no rational policy; the only apparent aim of his conduct being to retain his own power and, if possible, to win popu-

larity by means of military success. Something may, indeed, be urged in his favour; his absolute incompetence involved the king in even greater difficulties than those by which he would otherwise have been surrounded; his extravagance necessitated a constant appeal to Parliament for supplies; and thus he contributed indirectly to the failure of his master's schemes. In short, his faults and vices were in the end beneficial to the country, and the same sort of gratitude may be felt towards him as an opposition leader may be supposed to feel, when a Cabinet Minister commits an exceptionally bad blunder. He was replaced by two men of much greater ability —Laud and Wentworth, who were capable, at least, of devising a policy and of carrying it out.

In the case of Laud, perhaps, any extreme feeling would be more out of place than in the case of any other historical personage. His character may be summed up in the phrase, "well meaning." For there is no doubt that he meant very well, indeed he was thoroughly, almost pathetically, in earnest in his little schemes and little changes; little, that is, when thought of in connection with the great problems which were awaiting solution at the time. To him it was a matter of the most vital importance that the internal arrangements of one church should be as far as possible exactly like those of another, and that the preacher's surplice should be clean. He would have made an exemplary master at a small private school; he would have shone on a local board; but his passion for detail and his devotion to discipline and uniformity unfitted him altogether for the post

of archbishop, at a time when sympathy and tact were most needful. On the one side, he was ready to imperil the Established Church for the sake of some trifling point of ceremonial; on the other, he was prepared to involve the king in a bitter controversy with the majority of his subjects rather than allow one obscure clergyman to deviate by a hair's breadth from the narrow path of Laudian orthodoxy. But he was such a good man, so zealous and so amiable in his private life, that he must always receive some sympathy, although his character can hardly call forth either admiration or anger, and although respect for him must almost necessarily be tinged with a slight feeling of contempt. It may be added also, that the work which he did in enforcing greater order and more reverence was most necessary, and that the Church owes thanks to him for his reforms, while she may regret that he did not choose his time better and show more discretion in his method of reaching his ends.

For politics, as politics, Laud perhaps had little enthusiasm; and his eager co-operation with Wentworth in support of the royal authority, and his efforts to restore the Church to her old position in the king's councils, may be more justly attributed to the fact that he hoped in these ways to forward his ecclesiastical projects. But, in any case, he was at one with his far greater colleague in desiring that Charles should be absolute. If a neutral attitude is possible in estimating the archbishop's character, it is almost impossible to avoid partisanship in discussing that of Wentworth, the famous, or infamous, Earl

of Strafford. "That great person" had been the most ardent supporter of the opposition; he had led the attack upon Buckingham and had suggested that the Petition of Right should be presented in the form of a Bill, but, almost directly afterwards, had apparently suddenly changed sides and appears henceforth as the most ardent supporter of royalty. To account for this "apostasy" various theories have been advanced; it has been asserted that he was bribed, that he was won over by the personal charms of the king, that he had never really believed in the cause of the Parliament, and that he was honestly converted. With regard to all these views, it may be said that not one of them contains the whole truth; it is incredible that a man should be ready to die for a mere paymaster, or that a cold and calculating statesman should have been induced to change his policy for the sake of a few gracious words from a king; and though much may be said for the remaining explanations, they cannot be regarded as complete. It must be noted that Buckingham, who is supposed to have been the real object of Wentworth's opposition according to the one theory, was not assassinated until some time after the "apostasy" was accomplished, and it must be also noted that the other theory supposes a complete conversion to have taken place in little more than a month. As a matter of fact, the truth seems to be that, although there was a slight change in his views, it was not nearly so great as has been imagined. Wentworth was, paradoxical as the idea may seem, a moderate Liberal; he desired to see the prerogative limited,

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

GEORGE VILLIERS, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM (1592–1628), AND HIS FAMILY.

From the painting by Gerard Honthorst in the National Portrait Gallery.

but not destroyed; he desired Parliament to be strong, but not absolute. To him it appeared that, if only Charles would honestly abide by the Petition of Right, all his objects would be attained, but he found that the other opposition leaders were not satisfied with their victory and so he joined the royalist party. In doing so, his object was ultimately to bring the king to adopt a moderate policy, but immediately, so he thought, this was impossible. If he had to choose between royal and parliamentary tyranny, he preferred the former, and at present it seemed that the extremist attitude of the opposition necessitated the making of such a choice. According to this view, he was an exact prototype of the younger Pitt, a moderate reformer at last driven to become a strong Conservative by the revolutionary tendencies of the reforming party. He conceived it to be his duty to resist the democratic measures of the Commons and to secure first the triumph of the king, but, this done, he would have used all his influence in order to introduce moderation into the royalist councils. In short, he was consistent in advocating his moderate ideals.

Without doubt he was possessed of abilities of no mean order. He had a strong will and a clear head; he was above being influenced by small motives; his opposition to Buckingham was not really personal, but essentially political; and his desire for office was due to his firm conviction that in office he would be able to do good to his country. His chief error was a failure to appreciate the obstinacy of Charles and the hold which the exalted ideas of Divine Right had

taken upon him. As to his devotion to the Church, it may be safely asserted that this was political also; for he was ready to favour any creed or sect which would further his ends—the Establishment in England, the Catholics in Ireland, and the Presbyterians in Ulster and Connaught. Just as Laud put religion before politics, and supported the royal cause in order to be able to reform the Church, so Strafford subordinated religion to politics, and allied with the archbishop in order to obtain the necessary victory for the king. He was in all things essentially a politician; unlike most men of the age, he was indifferent upon the theological disputes, which agitated the world; and, unlike, very unlike, his colleagues on the royal side, he was great, resolute, and clear-headed.

With such a minister, Charles might well have triumphed had it not been for his own weakness and incompetence, and for the blind intolerance of Laud, but, as it was, the measures of the government were badly conceived and worse executed. The king made the initial mistake of violently persecuting his enemies in the late Parliament, and thus of converting those into martyrs who had before been merely champions. Eliot, Holles, Selden, and Valentine were imprisoned, and the brutality with which the first named was treated, before and after death, while it did nothing to further the aims of the king, roused a considerable amount of popular indignation. At the same time, Laud pursued his course of enforcing uniformity and of punishing resistance, unchecked; all free expression of opinion was sternly repressed;

the Star Chamber inflicted punishments out of all proportion to the offences, and an insult to the episcopacy or to Henrietta Maria was regarded as deserving a penalty little less than that inflicted for high treason. For daring to call Laud "a little great man" in a private letter, Osbaldistone was condemned to pay £5,000 and to lose his ears. Prynne, who attacked stage-plays in his long, dull, and laboured "Histriomastix," and whose guilt was aggravated by the fact that he had libelled the queen, was fined a similar amount, and, further, was expelled from the Bar, placed in the pillory, and banished from the kingdom, after his ears, too, had been cut off (1637). Such punishments merely defeated their own object; opponents of the Church, or of the government, who had possibly no particular merits, were glorified by the barbarity with which they were treated, and anger and discontent increased on all sides. Thousands of people lined the roads from London to the coast when Prynne and his two fellow-victims, Bastwick and Burton, went into exile —affording a clear indication of the general feeling towards the Star Chamber.

But still more vehement was the opposition, which resulted from the expedients adopted by Charles and his advisers to raise the revenue necessary for carrying on the government. In addition to the continued levying of tonnage and poundage, and to the constant heavy fines, inflicted for all manner of offences, advantage was taken of the complaisance of the judges to revive various laws, which had become obsolete from long disuse. All the king's measures

were strictly legal, however much they might be opposed to the spirit of the constitution, and they were therefore defended by the majority of the lawyers from choice rather than compulsion. In law, Charles was completely justified in reviving and extending the ancient forest jurisdictions, and in punishing all who had, in the last two or three hundred years, encroached upon them; in compelling all who possessed estates of the value of £40 or upwards, to receive knighthood, and to pay the consequent fees or fines due for previous neglect of the law; and in fining those whose titles to their lands were invalid. Even the revival of monopolies, although they had been declared illegal by Act of Parliament, might possibly be defended. But despite all the devices which were adopted to raise money, the financial position of the king remained weak, until the ingenuity of Noy, the Attorney-General, appeared to have found a never-failing source of income. In the course of his antiquarian researches, that most industrious of lawyers discovered that, in the dim ages of the past the Crown had issued writs to the cities and counties on the coast, requiring them to provide vessels for the royal needs, and he suggested that this ancient right might be utilised once more. If very large ships were demanded, their supply would be impossible, and a money contribution might be exacted instead. Thus the king would be able to tax a large portion of his realm, while theoretically observing the constitution, and he would be justified not merely in law, but by the actual state of the navy, owing to the weakness of which

the shores of England were then exposed to the ravages of pirates. Writs for Ship Money were, therefore, issued, at first to maritime districts only, but presently to the whole country—nominally in order to supply the very real needs of the fleet, actually in order to give the Crown a large and permanent revenue. And additional colour was given to the reasons openly assigned for this action, by the declaration that it was necessary to check the growing pride of the Dutch, on behalf of whom Grotius had written his great book "De Jure Belli et Pacis," setting at nought the time-honoured claim of the monarchs of England to the supremacy of the narrow seas (1634).

But, despite the plausible arguments with which it was supported, the levying of Ship Money caused more anger than any or all of the other exactions of the Crown. No one was so foolish as to suppose that all the money raised would be applied to the needs of the navy; on the contrary, all recognised that it was likely to render the king quite independent of Parliament. At first the judges declined to hear any arguments as to the legality of the writs, contenting themselves with declaring that they were issued by the royal command. At last, however, John Hampden, a man of some station, who had been prominent in the House of Commons, on the side of the opposition, protested that the writs were illegal, and the judges consented to deliver an opinion on the point (1637). That opinion was favourable to Charles, as might have been expected, but he received merely a bare majority, on the ground that such acts were permitted by the "discretionary power" of the

Crown ; and thus the question as to the validity of that "discretionary power" was left for future decision. By the greater part of the people the result was regarded as a practical victory for Hampden ; resistance was encouraged, and many, who would have gladly paid as a voluntary act, objected to pay when payment was demanded as a right. Indeed, the position of Charles grew rapidly more critical, and the only hope of royal success lay henceforth in the outcome of Strafford's work.

The great minister had been appointed to the Presidency of the Council of the North directly after his secession from the ranks of the opposition, but had been soon transferred to a more important post, the Lord Deputyship of Ireland. In that country the failure of O'Neill's rebellion had been followed by the "plantation of Ulster" (1610)—that is, the northern part of the island had been filled with Scotch colonists, whose strong Protestantism would supply the English government with a permanent body of supporters. But the state of chronic unrest continued, and was complicated by the fact that the Irish Sea swarmed with pirates, who made communication with England dangerous, paralysed trade, and terrorised the coasts. Moreover, the army and the revenue in Ireland were in a state of hopeless disorganisation ; the violence of parties was accentuated by the divisions of the Protestants, resulting from the presence of the Puritan element supplied by the Scotch ; and only in the North were there any signs of prosperity. Lord Falkland, after attempting to raise the necessary supplies by concessions to the

Irish in return for a voluntary gift, returned home in disgust at his failure, and in the absence of any Lord-Deputy matters went from bad to worse. The task of Strafford was, therefore, a most difficult one; for he was to restore order, raise supplies, and form an army, which should be capable of effectively supporting the royal cause in England. And it says much for his ability that he did a great deal towards the accomplishment of these ends; he cleared the sea of pirates, persuaded or compelled all parties to acknowledge his authority, created a revenue, and began to form an army. But partly from his own indiscretion, partly from the interference of Charles, and partly from lack of time, he eventually failed. For the attainment of his ends, he relied greatly upon the policy of playing off one party against the others, and consequently irritated all three. By filling his army with Catholics, he alienated the Protestants; by enforcing Episcopacy, he angered the Puritans; and by confiscating the Irish estates in Connaught (1636), to make room for new settlers, he roused the native population. And, too, Charles injured him by neglecting to observe his promise to his representative that the disposal of patronage should be left in his hands, since Strafford was thus unable to redeem his undertakings to his friends. Finally, events in England moved too quickly, and the rash conduct of the king in Scotland led to the absolute ruin of his cause.

It was probably upon the suggestion of Laud that an attempt was made to introduce the English Prayer Book, and Episcopacy on the English model,

into Scotland. James I. had already irritated the Scotch by his Five Articles, establishing various regulations, which were regarded as "Papistical" by the rigidly Calvinistic Presbyterians. By Charles much more vigorous measures were taken; the confiscated Church property was resumed, and Laud asserted that he was, as Archbishop of Canterbury, supreme over the Scottish Church, and used his authority to introduce that good order and discipline which was so dear to him. Eventually a riot at Edinburgh led to disturbances all over the country; a committee of estates, known as The Tables, was assembled in place of the Parliament, which Charles had dissolved, and in opposition to the Royal Council, and the Covenant which had been drawn up in defence of Protestantism against Mary Stuart was again taken (1638). The king appeared to give way, but actually he was preparing to enforce his views by arms, and a Scotch army, consisting mainly of men who had fought in Germany, was collected and placed under the command of Alexander Leslie. So powerful was it that the royal forces did not dare to fight, and a pacification was arranged. But Charles was now determined to have his own way, and in order to obtain the necessary supplies, he at last called a Parliament.

This assembly, to which the epithet "Short" has been applied, at once began to discuss grievances, and was, as a result, quickly dissolved. But the time for arbitrary rule had passed; the royal army was inefficient and mutinous, a great council of Peers could do but little, and even Strafford himself could

suggest nothing better than the calling of another Parliament. An armistice was concluded with the Scotch, who had already crossed the border, and six months after the dissolution the famous Long Parliament assembled (1640). Charles had thus practically to confess himself beaten and to acknowledge that it was impossible for him to rule alone. It remained to be seen whether he could bring himself to consent to the abandonment of his theories of government, and to be guided and limited by the estates of the realm, whose views had become much more extreme in the eleven years during which they had had no share in the government.

At first sight it may appear curious that, from the very moment of Elizabeth's death, the opposition to the Crown became much more determined, but the explanation of this fact is to be found in various causes, of which one of the most important was the entirely different theory of government which was adopted by the Stuarts. As has been pointed out already, the Tudors made no attempt and had no desire to overthrow or to curtail the liberties of England, but James and Charles deliberately tried to establish an absolutism. They were both firm believers in the Divine Right of Kings—a theory which had been originated to defend the Papal position as against the Empire, and which had been transferred to the service of sovereigns as against their subjects. Starting from the assumption, based upon the Bible, that all authority was from God, it was contended that Monarchy was a Divine institution and that resistance to the government was con-

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

SIR EDWARD COKE (1552–1634).

From the painting by Cornelius Jansen van Ceulen in the National Portrait Gallery.

sequently resistance to the decrees of Heaven. As a logical conclusion, it followed that as the king was indebted to the Deity alone for his position, he was also responsible to the Deity alone for his actions, that popular interference was contrary to the revealed will of God, and that the monarch was, by Divine Right, absolute. It was, therefore, impossible for the Stuarts to admit, if they would be consistent, that the people had any rights against them; the liberties of the country existed by royal favour alone, and it was optional for the Crown to continue to respect such liberties. In short, the Stuarts regarded their own authority as absolute, and doubted whether they even had the power of limiting themselves. To such pretensions, more dangerous in that age by reason of the appeal to the Bible, it was obviously necessary for the Commons to offer a strenuous opposition and to define clearly the rights which they themselves claimed.

And in their resolution to resist they were strengthened at first by the nationality of the sovereign. To the vast majority of Englishmen, a Scotchman was abhorrent because he was a Scotchman. Centuries of border warfare had caused the people of England to look upon their neighbours of Scotland as their national enemies. By the union of the two Crowns this antipathy was intensified, for James brought with him a crowd of needy retainers from the North, to whom the southern kingdom offered the prospect of speedy enrichment, with whom offices were filled and for whom lavish salaries were provided. Thus the immediate effect

of the accession of a Scotch king was to increase the hostility between the two countries, and James was at once unpopular with the masses. This unpopularity was aggravated by the faults of his own character and by his attitude of partisanship upon the Church question.

In the earlier days of the Reformation the Protestants had been united in their aims, they were at one in their desire to abolish papal supremacy, to reconstitute the Church on a truly national basis, and to do away with the more crying abuses of the old system. But when all these objects had been accomplished, differences began to appear; the logical conclusion of the assertion of the right of private judgment was to cause the rise of parties, and, as time went on, the lines of division were deepened. After the failure of the Armada, many Catholics joined the Anglican communion, and combined with the more conservative Churchmen to form the High Church Party, which had a liking for more elaborate ritual, better order in the conduct of services, and a greater show of reverence, while it presently became tinged with Arminian doctrines. On the other hand, the Puritans regarded all elaborate ceremonials as an abomination; they considered that the attack of Arminius upon the views of Calvin might lead to a revival of Catholicism, and, in short, they considered that any approximation to the older creed was most dangerous at a time when the Jesuits were apparently triumphing on the Continent. And, as the bishops tended to be High Church, they soon adopted Presbyterian views, and

came to regard the Episcopate as a door by which Catholicism might re-enter England. When James ascended the throne there was much doubt as to which side he would favour, but the subservient attitude of the bishops, one of whom did not scruple to declare at Hampton Court that the king was directly inspired by God, won him over, and he became a partisan. Charles, too, realised that the strength of the opposition to his political aims lay in the Puritan party, and he, therefore, joined eagerly in Laud's schemes. That archbishop was more concerned with ceremonies and Church government than with doctrines, although he was certainly Arminian in his views, but to his opponents his ritualistic reforms appeared to be simply the outward sign of his deeper plans, and he was, most unjustly in point of fact, accused of being a Catholic in disguise. And at a time when Spain was feared and when it was thought that the religious and political independence of the country was threatened by Jesuit intrigues, the charge was enough to unite the majority of the people in opposition to the Crown and to the Church. Further, the clergy were the most ardent supporters of Divine Right and of absolutism, so that the struggle was confused or intensified by the union of two distinct parties in the opposition—the friends of political freedom and the enemies of the established religion.

In one way the Stuarts, although blindly, did a great service to their country by their ardent support of the High Church party. Persecuted at home, the Puritans, or rather a number of them, sought peace

in a new continent. Following in the steps of Raleigh, a company of adventurers had formed a settlement in Virginia early in the reign of James I. (1607), and, though its fortunes for a time fluctuated, it soon became prosperous, owing to the successful cultivation of tobacco. They were followed by the famous "Pilgrim Fathers"—Puritans who had fled from James's persecution, and who sailed in the *Mayflower* to Massachusetts (1620). By those men, for whose stern morality and dogged will admiration must ever be felt, the colony of New Plymouth was founded, and here the Protestant sectaries were able to find the freedom of worship which was denied them at home. Later still, the Catholics settled in Maryland (1638), which was granted by Charles to Lord Baltimore, and to them belongs the great credit of having been the first to found a state where religious toleration was openly recognised. Before the outbreak of the Great Rebellion, Maine and Rhode Island had also been colonised. And the severity of Laud favoured the rise of the new settlements, for men of all stations in life—men, too, who were industrious and valuable citizens — crossed the Atlantic, and supplied an excellent population. And enjoying, as they did, almost complete independence, they transplanted in America those representative institutions, which seemed to be on the brink of destruction in the old country.

But, while a colonial empire grew up in this way, the commerce and industries of England did not flourish in the same proportion. During the earlier years of the Stuart Monarchy, indeed, the maintenance

of the Elizabethan traditions favoured trade, and much progress was made in the organisation of such companies as the East India. On the whole, however, the time was one of retrogression. The poverty and incapacity of the government allowed the navy to decay, the Algerine pirates insulted the weakness of England, and the Dutch disputed the mastery of the narrow seas. The former spirit of enterprise disappeared; the foreign policy of James being, perhaps, responsible for this, since it ended the national crusade against Spain. Peace with that country was, indeed, requisite for England, but such measures as the execution of Raleigh, for treason nominally, really because he had fought the Spaniards on the Orinoco, were unnecessary and discouraged further adventure in the West Indies. And, presently, the attention of the people was rivetted to home affairs, and there was no longer any inclination to embark upon mercantile speculation. Industry was adversely influenced by the granting of monopolies; the prosperity of the people was sapped by the royal exactions, and there are few bright points in a generally gloomy picture. Such as there are, are afforded by the draining of much of the Fens; by some progress in manufactures both in Northern England and in Ulster; and by an improvement in agriculture, as the result of the introduction of more scientific methods of cultivation.

With the meeting of the Long Parliament, the struggle against the Crown enters upon a new phase. So far the Commons had attempted mainly to prevent the royal authority from growing greater; they would

have been content to leave the king his prerogative intact, and to allow him all the theoretical power enjoyed by the Tudors, while insisting upon the practical recognition of its limitations. But the Stuarts had shown that they would be content with nothing short of absolutism, and accordingly the character of the opposition changed. Hitherto the Parliament had been merely asserting ancient rights, its control over taxation, its power of calling the actions of royal ministers in question, and its duty of discussing all matters of state. Henceforth it goes further, and it attempts to acquire not only the position which it had enjoyed under the Lancastrians, but one even greater—to exalt itself at the expense of the Monarchy, and to assume gradually all the functions of government. In short, up to the time of the meeting of the Long Parliament, the opposition had been Conservative, it now becomes first Radical and then Revolutionary, until eventually resistance becomes rebellion.

XI

THE GREAT REBELLION

(1640–1649)

It is with the meeting of the Long Parliament that the period of the Great Rebellion may be said most properly to begin, since, although the attitude of constitutional resistance was still maintained for a time by the opposition, yet it was the policy of the Commons in that Parliament, which eventually led to the outbreak of civil war. In the elections the royal candidates had been everywhere defeated ; members, to borrow a modern phrase, were returned with a mandate to put an end to the arbitrary proceedings of the king, and, as soon as the Houses assembled, the struggle assumed a critical aspect. On the very first day of the session, a speech upon the condition of the country was delivered by John Pym, a Somersetshire lawyer, who had distinguished himself in previous parliaments as a strenuous supporter of the opposition. He assailed, with especial vehemence, the Earl of Strafford, whose pre-eminent ability marked him out as the first object for attack, and it

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

THOMAS WENTWORTH, EARL OF STRAFFORD (1593–1641).

After Sir Anthony Van Dyke.

was resolved to impeach him forthwith for high treason. But the very multiplicity of the articles presented against the minister displayed the weakness of the grounds upon which the charge was based; the brilliance of the earl's defence alarmed his enemies, and, fearing that he might after all escape them, the popular leaders determined to abandon the impeachment in favour of the less satisfactory, but more direct, method of a Bill of Attainder. The measure was rapidly passed through both Houses, by large majorities in the Commons, by seven votes only in the Lords; the royal assent was reluctantly given, and the great minister was executed on Tower Hill (1641). Whatever may have been Strafford's faults, or even crimes, there can be no doubt that he was not guilty of treason to his king, and the justification for the conduct of the Parliament lies in the fact that he was the most dangerous enemy to popular liberty. So great was his ability, that, as long as he lived, there was no security that Charles would not regain his power. Such was the feeling of the judges, and such is the only real apology for the execution. It was a judicial murder, regrettable but necessary. On the other hand, it appears to be impossible to find any excuse for the king, on grounds either of morality or expediency. Twice had the royal word been voluntarily given that not a hair of the minister's head should be touched, and, although Strafford, with noble self-sacrifice, had urged his master not to trouble himself on this matter, Charles was morally bound not to allow the earl to suffer for the acts which he had done on behalf of his sovereign. And

the king was not intending to reform his ways; he did not sacrifice Strafford, so to speak, as a peace-offering to the angry Commons, in which case, perhaps, it might have been urged that the royal assent was given to the Bill as a guarantee of good faith. But Charles acted dishonourably by all parties; he gave up his truest friend from fear, to gain time for the preparation of his forces for the struggle, which he foresaw and which he intended to undertake; and for him there can be no feeling of pity, but merely profound contempt. Weak, pusillanimous, cowardly; the king abandoned Strafford, and destroyed the only man who might have been able to win him victory. And the entire futility of his baseness is shown by the fact that, within eighteen months, war had begun, and there was an end of his double-dealing.

Meanwhile, the Commons, whose position was strengthened by the presence of Alexander Leslie's army in the northern counties, followed up their initial success by striking at all the existing abuses. The archbishop was impeached and committed to the Tower, other ministers were fined, more fled across the sea, and the royalist party seemed to have ceased to exist. In rapid succession the courts of Star Chamber and of High Commission, the most formidable instruments of despotism, were abolished; Ship Money was declared to be illegal, and the Tudor Councils of Wales and of the North, of the county palatine of Chester and of the duchy of Lancaster, were done away. The first Triennial Act, declaring that Parliament must meet at least once in every

three years, gave stability to that body, and, as it was primarily intended to do, enabled it to raise loans, and thus to re-organise the finances of the country. By this measure there was established an elaborate machinery by which Parliament might meet despite the king, and it was followed by an Act which provided that the present House of Commons should be dissolved only with its own consent. Both these measures were strictly unconstitutional; for they trenched upon the acknowledged prerogative of the Crown, but they may be justified from the fact that Charles was undoubtedly only waiting for an opportunity to rescind all his concessions. Moreover, the Commons disliked, in the words of the title of the Act, the "inconveniences which may happen by untimely adjourning, proroguing or dissolving," and they feared that, in event of a dissolution, the royal vengeance would fall upon their leaders.[1]

The suspicion with which the king was regarded was greatly augmented by the events which took place in the recess. Charles visited Scotland and made great concessions to the Presbyterian party; a course of action which was supposed to be due to his wish to win over the Scotch to his side in the quarrel with the English Parliament. And the alarm thus caused was increased by what is known as "The Incident"—an attempt to murder Hamilton, the Covenanters' leader—to which the king was accused, unjustly, of being privy (1641). At the same time,

[1] It is important to note that the Triennial Act did not provide for a general election every three years at least; that the duration of a House of Commons was in no wise limited.

events took place in England which served to render the popular leaders still more anxious. Many men, who had been leaders of the opposition, went over to the other side, including such eminent members of Parliament as St. John, Hyde, and Colepepper, and such peers as Falkland, and a new and stronger royalist party was thus constituted. The guard, with which the Commons had sought to protect themselves, was withdrawn ; the Tower was entrusted to Luneford, a royalist swashbuckler ; some signs of a Popish plot, organised by the queen, were detected ; and the royal jewels were pawned in order to supply funds for the king. Finally, a great rebellion broke out in Ireland, the Protestants were massacred in hundreds, and the Catholics proclaimed that they were acting on behalf of, and by the orders of, Charles, a false statement, coloured, however, by the fact that it was the royal attempt to revive the army created by Strafford which precipitated the revolt. And so, when Parliament re-assembled it was at a time of great tension, and of fear lest all that had been accomplished should be undone.

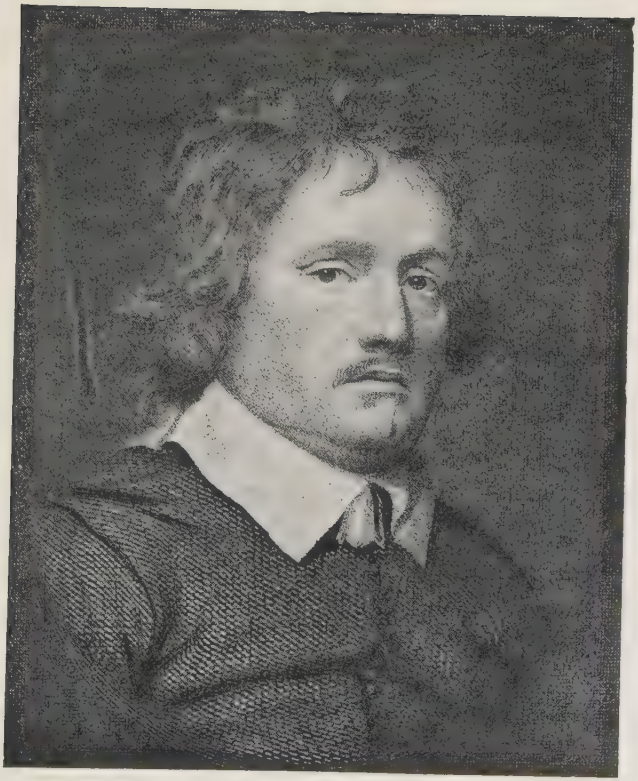
It was this feeling of fear and of distrust of the king's sincerity which caused the drawing up of the Grand Remonstrance (1641), in which all the misdeeds of Charles were set forth. It was a scathing indictment of the king's conduct throughout his reign, the manifesto of the popular party, and an appeal to all England to judge between the two sides. To many, it seemed to be an insult to a monarch who was trying to pursue a liberal course ; but it was justified by the conduct of Charles, which had

already proved to demonstration that to trust him would be little better than political suicide. And when it had been passed, by the narrow majority of eleven votes in a crowded House and after a long debate, it was clear that the king had now to choose between capitulation and open resistance, that the time for compromise had passed, and that by arms alone could the Monarchy secure the retention of that share of power which the Tudor sovereigns had enjoyed. Charles would have been better advised had he set up his standard at once, and declared that he would abide by his previous concessions, but not suffer himself to be compelled to grant more and more. But instead of thus taking a decided line, he committed a serious blunder, and one well calculated to bring over many waverers to the side of the Commons. Information reached him that the opposition intended to impeach the queen on a charge of having conspired against the liberties of the country and of having intrigued with the rebels. Charles, whose devotion to his wife was extreme, at once determined to impeach the leaders of this attack upon her, and selected the "Five Members"—Pym, Hampden, Strode, Holles, and Haselrig—together with Lord Mandeville (1642). This act, if not unconstitutional, was at least wholly unprecedented, and, while it alienated many of the peers, its immediate effect was to render the Commons practically unanimous; the articles against the members were voted a "scandalous paper," and many of those who had been in the minority on the Grand Remonstrance were now convinced of the hopeless-

ness of expecting any genuine amendment from the king. On the same day, Charles appeared at the House with a bodyguard to arrest his enemies, but they had already found a safe retreat in the city, and the attempt did the royal cause even greater harm than the impeachment had done already. For the king had but recently pledged his word for the personal safety of the members, and his action thus made it evident that no reliance could be placed upon his oath, while its utter failure made him the laughing stock of his capital. By these two acts, moreover, the party of conciliation was effectually destroyed ; henceforward all men were either royalists or parliamentarians, all were striving in fact for the absolute triumph of one party or the other, and, while the Commons hastily passed a bill for securing for themselves the control of the militia needed in Ireland, the king left London for the north. To a measure which would have made the Parliament absolutely supreme, and destroyed the most ancient and undoubted prerogative of the Crown, the royal assent was naturally refused, and, indeed, the very introduction of the Militia Bill was a confession that war was inevitable. On the one hand, the Commons began to mobilise the trainbands on their own authority ; on the other, Charles, declaring the kingdom to be in danger, issued commissions of array. The governor of Hull, acting upon orders from London, refused to allow the king to take possession of the military stores under his care ; small conflicts occurred all over the country, and a state of open rebellion already existed, when the royal standard

was unfurled at Nottingham and all faithful subjects summoned to do battle for the Monarchy.

In the war which was thus begun, the division of the country between the two parties was necessarily uncertain and confused, since it was essentially a strife of principles, in which even near relatives were to be found, oftentimes, upon different sides. On the whole, it may be said that the more backward portion of the kingdom—the North, Wales, and the West—favoured the king, while the strength of the Parliament lay in the South and East, the seats of national wealth. The nobles were ranged almost equally on either side, but the merchants and trading classes were, on the whole, opposed to Charles, while London was the mainstay of the popular party. Generally speaking, all who were more especially liable to be influenced by new ideas, and all who were particularly interested in a sound financial system, were Parliamentarians, since such men were generally either Puritans, or had suffered from the exactions of the Crown. On the other hand, the clergy were almost unanimous in their adhesion to Charles, who was further supported by many of the nobility, rather the larger number; by the more moderate men, such as Falkland, from a sense of duty, and by the conservative section of the population in religion as well as politics. In the initial stages of the war the royalist army was composed of "gentlemen," the Parliamentarian of tradesmen and artisans; both suffered much from lack of military training and discipline, and the generals on either side were somewhat incompetent. The royal forces were practically



JOHN PYM (1584–1643).

From a miniature by Cooper.

commanded by Prince Rupert,[1] who was brilliant and energetic, but headstrong and rash. The Lieutenant-General of the Parliamentary army was the Earl of Essex, who was plodding, but very slow and nervous.

In the first two campaigns the king was generally successful, and had it not been for two strategical blunders on his part he might have ended the war by the occupation of London. Immediately upon the outbreak of hostilities he advanced south-eastwards, fought an indecisive action with Essex at Edgehill, which was for all practical purposes a royalist victory, and reached Turnham Green (1642). Here he found a hastily raised army entrenched, with the object of covering the capital; and, with characteristic inability to seize an opportunity, he withdrew without fighting. The only tangible result of the first campaign was the occupation of the south-west Midlands, including Oxford, henceforward the royal headquarters. During the following year, however, the king's forces were almost everywhere triumphant. Sir Ralph Hopton annihilated the Parliamentary army in the West; the Marquis of Newcastle crushed Fairfax, and conquered most of the North; and the solitary failure was against the army of the "Association." This last was a force raised by the united eastern counties, with the dual object of protecting their own districts and of carrying on war beyond their borders. It was commanded by the Earl of Manchester, but the moving spirit in it was that of Oliver Cromwell.

[1] Prince Rupert was the king's nephew, being a son of the Princess Elizabeth and of Frederic, Elector Palatine.

After the successes of Newcastle Fairfax joined hands with this force, and together they stayed the tide of royalist progress. But Charles had at this time the fairest opportunity which ever fell to his lot of taking London, since between him and that city there was only the small and disorganised army of Essex. The king, however, went westwards and besieged Gloucester, in order to complete the reduction of the Severn valley. Parliament succeeded in raising an army and relieving it, and the royalists failed even to intercept this force, which returned to its original posts near London after fighting a drawn battle at Newbury (1643).

But the failure of either side to gain any decisive advantage now led both parties to seek for allies. The king brought over the army which had been maintaining a doubtful struggle with the Irish rebels, with whom a truce was concluded, but it was destroyed at Nantwich by Fairfax. On the other hand, Parliament entered into an alliance with the Scotch; the Covenant was taken, Presbyterianism was recognised as the official form of religion, and an army under Lord Leven crossed the border to co-operate against Newcastle. It advanced to form a junction with Cromwell and Fairfax. Rupert hastened to the assistance of the Marquis, and a great battle was fought at Marston Moor (1644). The Parliamentarians gained a complete victory, and resistance in the North was practically at an end. But at the same time the royalists had been successful elsewhere, and an attempt on the part of Parliament to recover the ground lost in the West had resulted in

the capitulation of Lostwithiel, by which Devonshire and Cornwall were once more secured for the king. And at the second battle of Newbury, although both sides claimed to have won, Charles succeeded in forcing his way back to Oxford. It had become, indeed, evident that more competent leaders were required by the Parliament and that the personnel of the army must be reformed. This work of reformation was undertaken by the rising party of the Independents, of whom Cromwell was the real leader.

Hitherto the management of the war from the Parliamentary side had been in the hands of the Presbyterians, who were essentially conservative in politics and dogmatic in religion. As a result they adopted an invariably respectful attitude towards the king personally; they entrusted the chief commands to men whose very moderation made them averse to very vigorous action, and they would not raise regular forces; while their narrowness alienated many who would have otherwise actively supported them. As early as the battle of Edgehill, Cromwell, as he watched the rout of whole regiments before the cavalry of Rupert, had been convinced of the necessity of supplying the Parliamentary army with a motive of enthusiasm in order to counterbalance the devoted loyalty of their opponents. The incompetence of Manchester further convinced his great subordinate that a redistribution of commands was essential to success, and the good fortune of the army of the Association proved that much more organisation was requisite. But to all such measures

the Presbyterians were opposed, since they hoped against hope that some accommodation might be reached and the war ended without a decisive victory on either side; and Cromwell was obliged to rely upon the Independents alone. It was with their assistance that the Self-denying Ordinance, declaring that members of either House should be incapable of holding military commands, was introduced and finally passed. In this way Essex and Manchester were compulsorily, though honourably, retired, and their places taken by Fairfax and Cromwell, for the benefit of the latter of whom a special dispensation was granted from the effects of the recent Ordinance. At the same time the army was reconstituted; it was no longer a kind of militia, but became a regular standing force, which was quickly filled with men of strong religious convictions who were determined to triumph, and that completely (1645).

The result of these methods was quickly seen in the rapid collapse of the royalist cause. After some preliminary successes, the combined Parliamentary army, under Fairfax and Cromwell, met the royalists, commanded by the king and Rupert, at Naseby (1645), and gained a complete and overwhelming victory. With it all hope of success for Charles practically vanished. His last real army, that in the West, was crushed by Fairfax, who soon afterwards took Bristol by assault, and Montrose, who had been successfully upholding the royal interest in Scotland, was defeated at Philiphaugh. The king still wandered about the country, but place after place surrendered to the victorious "men of religion." The

last hope of Charles was destroyed by the untimely discovery of his negotiations with the Irish rebels, and eventually he surrendered himself to the Scotch, trusting that his person would be safe among them, and that he would thus have time to avail himself of the growing dissensions between the Presbyterians, who were still supreme in Parliament, and the Army, which was equally supreme "out of doors." But he soon found that this expectation was vain. The Scotch, after attempting to induce him to join them whole-heartedly, and finding that they could not trust him, retreated northwards, and finally, on the eve of recrossing the border, handed him over to the English commissioners, who, in return, supplied them with the balance of the stipulated subsidy (1646).

Having thus obtained possession of the person of the king, the Presbyterians were almost supreme, the one check upon them being supplied by the Army. That body they now ordered to disband, but the military "Agitators" urged their men not to suffer themselves to be deprived of all share in the fruits of that victory which their arms had won, and persuaded them to demand their arrears of pay as an excuse for neglecting to obey the Commons. And when their reply was met by the "Declaration," in which they were stigmatised as enemies of the State, the soldiers marched upon the capital and assumed a far more threatening attitude, while they improved their position by removing the king to their own quarters, not altogether against his will (1647). Still moving nearer and nearer to London, the Army next formulated its definite wishes, asking for religious tolera-

tion, regular parliaments, and certain reforms in taxation and the law, wishes so moderate that they might have been granted had not the citizens of the capital, always strongly Presbyterian, encouraged the Parliament to reject them. Unable to obtain redress, the soldiers took up a position near Hampton Court in order to overawe their enemies, when the action of the king changed the whole situation. Alarmed at the growth of the influence of the more extreme Independents, he suddenly fled to Carisbrook, and from that place organised what is known as the Second Civil War (1648). Isolated royalist risings occurred in many parts of England. The fleet declared in favour of Charles, and a strong Scotch army crossed the borders in his interest. But the common danger temporarily united Presbyterians and Independents. Fairfax reduced the South, Cromwell crushed the invaders at Preston, the help expected from France never came, and the fall of Colchester ended a thoroughly foolish and ill-advised attempt to revive active opposition.

And its complete failure sealed the fate of the king. As a result of its victories the Army was now all powerful, and in it the violent "Levellers" had acquired a complete ascendancy, and were determined not to allow Charles to retain his throne on any conditions. One last attempt on the part of the Presbyterians to complete the negotiations failed owing to the obstinacy of the king, who only gave way when it was too late, and the Army now secured the subserviency of Parliament by means of "Pride's Purge." All the members who were not

ardent Independents were expelled, and the remainder, the "Rump," was wholly at the mercy of the military. It was resolved to bring Charles to trial, and for this purpose it was declared to be treason to levy war against the representatives and liberties of the people, and a High Court of Justice was appointed. When he was caused to appear before this body, the king naturally refused to plead, and equally naturally was condemned to death. Two days later he was executed in front of his own palace of Whitehall, protesting on the scaffold that he died a martyr to his zeal for the liberties, civil and religious, of his country. This claim and the calm courage with which he met his fate did much to enlist sympathy upon his side which was very far from being merited, but which served to obliterate the memory of his many misdeeds (1649).

By all parties the execution of Charles I. has been regarded as at least a blunder, but it is hard to suggest an alternative course which might have succeeded. His death, indeed, merely revived the royalist party. Many who had opposed him were prepared to be reconciled to his son, and many more, including even devoted Parliamentarians like Fairfax, revolted from the idea of such violence. To the other courses, however, which might have been adopted there were grave objections. Charles had shown himself to be a man in whom no confidence could be placed, and whom no oaths could bind. He regarded it almost as a religious duty to retain his absolute power, which, as he thought, had been entrusted to him by God. And had he been restored

to any degree of authority, however slight, he would have very soon attempted to regain his old position, to the constant unsettling of the country. There are equally strong arguments against the idea that he might have been deposed. In the first place, he would have made constant efforts to recover the throne, backed by the royalist party in England and probably by foreign help; and in the second place, it would have been almost impossible to fill the vacancy. The other members of the Stuart family would have hardly accepted the crown. There was no rival dynasty to bring forward, and to the selection of some prominent Englishman there were obvious objections; while the subsequent experience of Cromwell shows that even the greatest Parliamentarian could not safely ascend the throne. As long as Charles lived, indeed, he was bound to be a constant source of danger both to the liberties of the country and to its internal peace, and possibly, from a purely political point of view, the leaders of the opposition chose the lesser of two evils. They united their own party by an irrevocable bond, since they could hope for no mercy in event of a restoration; and they showed that they were resolved at all costs not to allow the establishment of an absolute monarchy.

The other question, that of the moral justification for the execution, must always be decided to a great extent in accordance with the view taken as to the rights and wrongs of the Great Rebellion. And in proportioning these, a sharp distinction must be drawn between the letter and the spirit of the con-

stitution. Charles was, during the earlier part of his reign, legally right, and equally the Parliament was constitutionally right; at a later date, both parties resorted to measures which can only be justified by the necessities of civil war. According to the constitution, the king was entrusted with a Discretionary Power—a power which might be exercised in all times of danger, of which times, again, the sovereign was sole judge. In this way many of the royal acts can be justified, since the sovereign at every crisis could, as it were, temporarily suspend the constitution. But, at the same time, there was an understanding as to the use which might be made of this special branch of the prerogative, and clearly there was nothing in the condition of England or in the aspect of foreign affairs during the reign of Charles, to justify a constant resort to expedients only intended for use at the most critical junctures. In other words, the levying of various exactions was in accordance with the letter and wholly contrary to the spirit of the constitution; a fact proved by the necessity under which Charles and his advisers laboured of seeking for the justification of their acts in an appeal to distant ages since when the whole constitutional theory had been most profoundly modified—to ages, indeed, before Parliament existed; when the whole system of taxation was different, and when *Magna Carta* and the *Confirmatio Cartarum* were still to come.

And yet, after all, these arguments lose sight of the one real and eternal justification for the Great Rebellion and for all the acts into which that move-

JOHN HAMPDEN (1594–1643).

From Nugent's "Life of Hampden."

ment led the men who organised and directed it. For this is to be found in the ends to which it was directed. In politics, at least, whatever may be the case in private life, the end very frequently justifies the means, and never had any opposition a more righteous or noble end. It was directed to the attainment of two objects—the preservation of the ancient political liberties of the English people, and the maintenance of freedom of religious thought. Had Charles triumphed, he would have established a civil government similar to that of France in pre-revolutionary days, and an ecclesiastical *régime* which would have compelled all to observe the narrow limits of Laudian orthodoxy. If it be held that popular government and liberty, civil and religious, are things not to be desired; and that the ideal political system is that in which all power is, as far as possible, concentrated in the hands of one irresponsible person; then, and only then, can it be held also that the Parliamentary leaders were wrong in resisting Charles, even to the point of civil war. It may be readily admitted that the measures of the opposition were legally indefensible and constitutionally unsound; that they violated the previously accepted canons for the regulation of the relations of sovereign and subject; and that they were eventually characterised by a violence and bigotry, as bad as the tyranny of the king and, perhaps, even worse. But the principle, to the maintenance of which Pym gave up his life and for which Hampden died and Cromwell fought, was a right principle, and, while the excesses of the party must be deplored, its triumph

must be regarded as a blessing for the country by all who are not blind to the whole teaching of history. And, since it was necessary to this triumph, the Great Rebellion stands justified, and with it even the proceedings of the High Court of Justice. That body, most undoubtedly, had no jurisdiction over the king ; it was not representative of the majority either in or out of Parliament; it was called upon to administer a law passed with the specific object of condemning a certain person and rendered retrospective with the same object, and it had no real status. But, whether the people wished it or no, it was necessary to remove the king or at least to render him harmless, and, as has been said already, although it is easy to say that the execution of Charles was a blunder, it is not so easy to say what alternative course could have been adopted. In a time of such stress, strict considerations of morality had necessarily to be ignored ; and it is only upon the grounds of expediency that the act can be fairly judged. In short, while utterly rejecting the views of either extreme party, that the king was right or that the Parliament was right, legally and constitutionally, in all their acts, and while allowing that the position of either side was in many respects defensible and in many others indefensible, the Great Rebellion can only be regarded as productive of much ultimate good, and the victory of the Parliament as beneficial for England, whatever may have been the errors or even the crimes of its leaders, and however baneful may have been its immediate results.

And that many of its results should have been

deplorably bad was inevitable, owing to the character of the two parties. Quite half the sympathy which is accorded to the Royalists is due to the popular conception of the "Cavalier" and "Roundhead." The former is usually typified as a man with long hair, well dressed, brave, generous, warm-hearted, and a gentleman. The latter is pictured as a man soberly dressed, hypocritical, snivelling, sneaking, and mean; averse to all forms of gaiety, however innocent; and, in short, all that is implied by the single adjective "dour," used in its very worst sense. And as is usually the case, the popular view is grossly exaggerated. The Royalists were not all like the Royalists of the so-called historical novel, and the Parliamentarians were not all like their representatives in the same works. And, while it is true that the king relied principally upon the upper classes, yet the Great Rebellion was essentially a war of parties, and many nobles and gentlemen were found ranged upon the side of the opposition.

The average Cavalier was a man amiable in many respects, brave, commonly honourable, and probably more attentive to the fashions of the day in dress than his opponents. At the same time, he was likely to be licentious; he was coarse, according to modern ideas; and he was brutal, if judged by the same standard. He was, in fact, a seventeenth-century gentleman, a man not superior in general character to the Squire Westerns of a later date, and having both the virtues and the vices common in his station of life at that particular period. On the other hand, the average Puritan was in character the direct

antithesis of his opponent. Taken at his best, he was an intensely religious man, who looked for guidance to the Old, rather than to the New, Testament, and who delighted more in the stories of righteous vengeance than in the mild precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. He was very stern, cold, forbidding, a man whom it was almost impossible to like and almost impossible not to respect. And from his great hatred for worldly vanities, he became an enemy to anything which partook of the nature of frivolity; he set constantly before him the pictures of Heaven and of Hell, more especially the latter; and he regarded life in this world as a necessary journey to a better land, the pains and pleasures of which were little to be regarded. He was commonly a moral man, generally earnest in the performance of his duty, honest, and careful in his conversation, but, at the same time, he had many faults. The very depth of his fervour made him intolerant; he was only too ready, so to speak, to "hew Agag in pieces before the Lord," and, profoundly convinced of his own rectitude, and unconscious of any temptation to do wrong, he could make no allowance for the frailties of less fortunate men. And, in many cases, he was spiritually vain; for, inasmuch as he believed that the Deity vouchsafed direct guidance to him in every moment of his life, he considered that he was immune from the danger of erring, and he justified any action, however bad it might appear to be, by an appeal to his God. Moreover, many Puritans were undoubtedly hypocrites, and hypocrites of a peculiarly disgraceful type; men who

shrank from no crime, and who protected themselves by professing that they were inspired; who were ever ready to rebuke the vices of others, while being, at the same time, far more vicious themselves. And their hatred for everything which they considered as worldly, led them to attack all pleasures, however harmless; to consider gay clothing as a mark of the "sons of perdition," and to restrict social intercourse, until the most riotous amusement was a prayer-meeting and the family circle was regulated like a camp.

With two parties so vehemently opposed to one another not only in their political aims, but in their whole train of thought, excesses were inevitable. As Charles was convinced that absolute power was given him by the Deity, so his opponents conceived it to be a religious duty to exterminate "the enemies of the Lord"; they imagined that to them, as to the Israelites of old, the Divine command had gone forth "to slay and spare not." And when they declared that the execution of Charles, for example, was ordered by Providence, they were not necessarily, or even probably, hypocrites; rather, they believed what they said and acted from the highest possible motives. And in this way, the death of Laud, which was really an act of useless and senseless cruelty, was undoubtedly regarded by its authors as a just punishment for one who had been a ready instrument in the hands of Satan to vex the children of God. The Puritans not only sought the guidance of Heaven in every event, however trivial; they considered themselves to be under the especial protection of the

Photo] [*Emery Walker.*

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY (1573–1645).

After the painting by Sir Anthony Van Dyke at Lambeth Palace.

Deity ; as occupying a position like that of the sons of Jacob, and as being cared for and directed by Jehovah. And this deeply religious feeling, which is almost inconceivable at the present day as actuating a great political party, was at once responsible for, and, in a sense, excuses, the many foolish and wicked deeds of the Puritans, whose acts can in nowise be judged fairly unless the spirit of that most remarkable century be taken into consideration.

To this same cause must be attributed, in a great measure, the ultimate success of the Parliament. The royalists were animated by two feelings—by a sense of devotion to a person or, rather, to the institution which that person represented, and by a love of fighting for fighting's sake. Their cause was very dear to them, and for it they spent their blood and treasure, as is shown by the many instances of individual self-sacrifice. And, on the field of battle, a sense of honour impelled them to die rather than acknowledge defeat from an enemy whom training and tradition had taught them to despise. As has been seen, the early years of the civil war demonstrated the superiority of the "gentlemen of honour"; the forces of the Parliament were, at first, essentially mercenary, and there was no principle which could move them to emulate their opponents in dash, courage, or endurance. But the genius of Cromwell saw both the cause of failure and the secret of success. Under his auspices the new Army arose, composed of "men of religion," who were only too ready to believe that their cause was blessed by Heaven and that they were fighting the battle of the Lord In

this way a motive for devotion, and a strong incentive to do their best, was supplied to the forces of the opposition; and in the contest of rival principles that of religion won, because it was the higher, more inspiring, and more permanent principle. The Puritanism of the "New Model Army" was the truest cause of its success. At the same time there were other reasons, important, but not conclusively so, why the Parliament should have won in the end. Despite the generosity of his friends and despite his creation of a rival assembly at Oxford, Charles was handicapped by the uncertainty of his financial position; since the opposition were able to utilise the national credit in their capacity as representatives of the people. Their revenue, although scanty enough, was thus more certain than that of the king, and they enjoyed the almost unanimous support of the wealthy citizens of London. In their allies, too, the Parliament were the more fortunate; for while both Scotch and Irish were unpopular in England, the latter were the more hated as being Catholics, and the former were able to give far more effective assistance. Finally, the royalist leaders were no generals, whereas Cromwell stands in the very first rank among military commanders, and Fairfax was inferior only to his great colleague.

It has been seen that, at the time of the Wars of the Roses, the other great period of civil strife in England, the general life of the people was little influenced; but all classes of the community were profoundly affected by the Great Rebellion. All intercourse between the two parties was practically suspended

during the progress of the struggle, and as each party drew support from every class, so all home trade was hampered even more than it would have been by the mere fact that internal strife was proceeding. And commerce was also restricted, partly from the same reasons and partly owing to the uncertainty of foreign relations, the countries of Europe being generally unwilling to enter into intimate relations with either king or Parliament, until victory had declared itself, the merchants naturally following, to a great extent, the example of their respective governments. Even the distant colonies in America felt the shock of the conflict in the Motherland, since the stream of immigration to them ceased with the meeting of the Long Parliament and the consequent prospect of toleration at home. At the best, the period is one of stationary prosperity, but it was only in such cities as London that even this negative success was achieved; elsewhere there was a marked decline. And the absorbing interest which was felt in politics is illustrated by the literature of the time, which was almost wholly partisan. Whereas the reign of James I. had seen the production of such masterpieces as the later plays of Shakespeare and the "Novum Organon" of Bacon, the latter part of his son's reign could show little more than the controversial effusions of Prynne or the early Latitudinarians; useful enough as contributions to the history of the time, but hardly works of much literary merit.

In the Great Rebellion was seen the outcome of the Tudor policy of organisation; for although it was, as has been said, a contest between parties, not classes,

yet the management of the opposition was largely, if not entirely, in the hands of these men, who belonged to the class entrusted with the administration in local districts. It is interesting to note that the Parliamentary leaders came generally, not from the towns, but from the rural districts. Pym was a native of Somerset, Eliot of Cornwall, Hampden of Buckinghamshire, Cromwell of Huntingdonshire, Fairfax of Yorkshire. In other words, they were the representatives of the especial *protéges* of the Tudors, the country gentlemen. And they brought to Westminster the experience which they had gained or had inherited from their fathers in the country. Had it not been for the Tudor policy in local government the opposition would have sought in vain for adequate leaders; administrative ability would have been the monopoly of the royalists. But, as it was, the heads of the Parliamentary party had only, so to speak, to enlarge their sphere of activity, and to conduct the business of that party in accordance with the principles which they had learnt in the course of managing parochial affairs. When they had triumphed it remained to be seen whether they were capable also of administering a nation.

And after the execution of Charles three great questions remained for solution. It was necessary, in the first place, to discover whether England could become a Republic; whether the affections of the country could be weaned from that monarchical system which had existed from the earliest ages; or whether a king was, indeed, essential to the peace, happiness, and prosperity of the people. Secondly,

it was necessary to decide whether the Parliament should be supreme; whether it should really govern; or whether the transference of executive powers altogether to that body was impossible, and only certain to lead to the despotism of that great military force which it had now called into being. And, lastly, it remained to be decided whether the new government could satisfactorily solve the religious difficulty; whether it could reconcile the varying creeds, and establish either uniformity or toleration; or whether the victory of the opposition merely involved the granting of coercive powers to one sect instead of to another. The solution of these problems was found in the eleven years which followed, and which ended with the restoration of the House of Stuart.

XII

THE RULE OF OLIVER CROMWELL

(1649–1660)

THE immediate effect of the execution of Charles was to cause an accession of strength to that very party to which it was intended to be the final blow. In each of the three kingdoms the royalist cause gained fresh vitality from the death of its leader, and the Cavaliers, who had been a discredited minority since the collapse of the Second Civil War, obtained a majority in Scotland and in Ireland, and assumed a respectable position in England. The terror, indeed, of a victorious army in the last-named country kept their zeal within bounds, but elsewhere they broke out into open resistance to the shadowy Parliament, which claimed to have succeeded to the authority of Charles. At the same time the extremists in the ranks of the soldiery—the Levellers, the Fifth Monarchy men, and so forth—rose against their officers, preaching communism and godliness, and declaring that the day had come for the rule of the Saints on earth. It was a paramount necessity for

the continuance of the new Republic, for the permanence of the lately inaugurated era of "Liberty," that the rising in Ireland should be repressed, and now the men selected for service there refused to go across the sea, accusing the government of having chosen all who were known to be opposed to them. But the growing spirit of mutiny was sternly repressed by Fairfax and Cromwell, the ringleaders were shot, and, despite one or two isolated outbreaks, order was quickly restored. A few officers were put to death, the men submitted and were pardoned, and the bulk of the Army was henceforth faithful. A strong and well-equipped force was prepared for the conquest of Ireland, and the command was given to the only possible general, Cromwell, who was appointed Lord Lieutenant by the Parliament.

He had no easy task to perform. Since the Irish rebellion had begun eight years before, the condition of that island had been one of the most complete anarchy, and each of the three parties was engaged in open warfare with the other two. The Duke of Ormond, as the royal representative, had commanded a small English force in or near Dublin, but the king had withdrawn the best of his soldiers, and, being left at the mercy of the rebels, he had handed over the capital to Colonel Jones, a Parliamentarian. That officer, who had brought but a scanty body of troops with him, heroically maintained a doubtful struggle against vastly superior numbers. Meanwhile the Catholics were ruled by a Papal Nuncio, and since their negotiations with Charles had proved abortive, were contending for complete independence.

INIGO JONES'S BANQUETING HALL, WHITEHALL.

From a print in the Crace Collection.

Lastly, in Ulster the Scotch colonists were foes alike to Ormond and O'Niell; and while nominally fighting for the Parliament, were really engaged in an attempt to secure their own freedom from all external control. Such was the state of affairs at the time of the king's execution, an event which served to reconcile all parties. Save for Dublin (held by Jones), and Londonderry (where Monk commanded), all Ireland became royalist. The devout Catholics, who had sent away the Nuncio, and the deeply Calvinistic Scots united in their desire to punish the regicides, and in begging Charles II. to visit his faithful subjects. The cause of the Parliament seemed well-nigh hopeless.

But the genius of Cromwell was equal to the work, and his habit of making war in deadly earnest soon sufficed to quell opposition. He announced that no quarter would be given to garrisons which refused the summons to surrender. Drogheda, where some four thousand men were slain in cold blood, afforded a ghastly proof of his sincerity. At Wexford the same course was pursued, and after this his operations were practically confined to the reception of formal submission (1649). Within a year the work of conquest was nearly complete, and the rapidity of his progress is almost a justification for his severity. For Cromwell has been held up to reprobation as a brutal and inhuman villain, and even now the hatred of the Irish for his name is not extinct. But although at the present day such conduct could not possibly be excused, the "massacre of Drogheda," when all the circumstances are considered, appears as little

more than an act of salutary severity. It does not seem to be true that any, save the soldiers, were put to death, and as they had received fair warning of the results of stubborn resistance, they brought their fate upon themselves. And the slaughter of a garrison which declined to capitulate was in no wise contrary to the ordinary practice of war at that time; it was a course pursued by many generals on the Continent, and therefore regarded as lawful. Moreover, the pious hope expressed by Cromwell that such an example would save much bloodshed, both reveals, in all probability, the motive which induced him to give the order, and was actually fulfilled by the subsequent course of the war. In short, the severity shown, even if it were cruelty, was useful; it saved Ireland from a very prolonged struggle, and on these grounds may be pardoned.

The affairs of Scotland compelled the Parliament to recall its general from the Irish war, the conclusion of which was entrusted to Ireton. Since their futile intervention in the Second Civil War the Scots had contented themselves with maintaining their own practical independence, and did not interfere with the affairs of the south until the execution of the king roused them to action. But soon after this event both the Covenanters and the old Royalists entered into negotiations with Charles II. On behalf of the latter party Montrose raised some men on the Continent, and landed in Scotland, but he failed completely. His fleet had been scattered by a storm, few reinforcements joined him after he

had landed, and he was easily taken prisoner by the covenanting Duke of Argyle. His execution followed—an act of religious bigotry, which must for ever be a reproach to the Presbyterian party of the seventeenth century. Meanwhile, Charles, finding that the royalists were not strong enough to place him on the throne, callously disowned Montrose and accepted the rigorous conditions proposed to him by the Covenanters, as the price of their assistance. He landed in Scotland, and an army, under Leven and the younger Leslie, was assembled to support him; while the Malignants—the true royalist party—were excluded from serving their king, and generally repressed. To meet this danger the Parliament sent Cromwell northwards, but that general was soon reduced to a position of grave danger. At Dunbar he was hemmed in between Leslie and the sea, and it was only the errors of his enemies, who left an impregnable position to fight in the plain, that saved him from certain destruction (1650). As it was, he gained a great victory, and was able to capture Edinburgh, and gradually reduce the Lowlands. In the course of this work, whether by accident or design is uncertain, he allowed Charles to pass him and enter England. Thither Cromwell pursued him, and at Worcester annihilated his army. The king escaped to the Continent, and the royalist cause was temporarily ruined beyond hope (1651).

The effect of the Irish and Scottish victories of the Army was to make that force absolutely supreme, and as Fairfax had retired into private life, Cromwell was henceforth the real ruler of England. And he

at once turned his attention to the settlement of the government. Upon the death of Charles I. a Republic had been proclaimed. The House of Lords was abolished, some new members were elected, some old members were recalled, and the Rump, thus reinforced, arrogated to itself the title of a Parliament, and attempted to rule the country. But it met with strenuous opposition on all sides. The Levellers drew up "The Agreement of the People," which was a document embodying their political proposals; and in face of the growing dissatisfaction the government was obliged to name a date for its own dissolution. The critical turn taken by affairs in Ireland and Scotland, however, gave the Rump an excuse for prolonging its existence, and when the victory of Worcester had restored internal peace, it still clung to its ill-gotten power. Circumstances, however, soon arose which ended the rule of the Westminster oligarchs. The soldiers were angered by the arrogance of an assembly which they regarded as their own creation, and the dangers which threatened from abroad rendered a speedy settlement absolutely essential. To the suggestion of the Rump that the elections should take place in three or four years' time, the military naturally would not agree, and the financial expedients, necessitated by the outbreak of the Dutch war, were at once ill-advised and unpopular. The Army petitioned for a dissolution. The all-powerful Cromwell hinted that this advice was good, and in great alarm, and with foolish haste, a Bill was rapidly passed for the purpose of creating a new Parliament. But the oligarchy, with a fatal

disregard for the feelings of the country, introduced a proviso that they should themselves be *ex-officio* members, and thus made a last attempt to perpetuate their own existence. Cromwell was already tired of the ineffectiveness of the government. From his place in the House he upraided the unhappy Rump with its ungodliness and incapacity, and when he was called to order he effectually silenced his opponents by summoning in his guards. The House was cleared without ceremony, and the miserable remnant of one of the greatest Parliaments of English history was expelled by force, without the violence exciting a single pang of regret (1653).

But although the Rump had been so long utterly discredited that no one, "not even a dog," mourned for it, a new political situation was created by its expulsion. For hitherto it had been the government of England, at least nominally, but now Cromwell, whatever had been his true position before, was exalted still further, in that he alone had any legal status, and it rested with him to settle the form of the constitution. And he at once entered upon those curious experiments in government-making which distinguish him from all others who have risen on the arms of a triumphant army to the height of power. Within three months of the dissolution of the Long Parliament he assembled that body which has been called indifferently the "Little," "Nominee," or "Barebones" Parliament (1653). It consisted solely of violent Independents, nominated by the great general. It altogether failed either to command respect or to pass any useful measures, and

HAMPTON COURT.

when its violence was rebuked by its creator, it voluntarily retired into the obscurity from which it had arisen. Having thus failed in his first attempt, Cromwell drew up the "Instrument of Government," a scheme mainly remarkable as affording almost the only example of a despot despotically arranging for limitations upon his despotism. He divested himself of that absolute veto which the command of an invincible army might have given him; he assumed the title of "Lord Protector," but bound himself to rule in conjunction with a Council of State and a House of Commons; and, as though he feared his own hasty temper, he bound himself not to put an end to any such House until it had sat for five months. In the interval before its assembling he devoted his attention to a reform of the law and of the franchise, the latter being an excellent project and well executed, and when the "New Model" Parliament met he prepared to enjoy the fruits of his disinterested zeal (1654). But again he failed. The Commons began to question the validity of their own existence, and attempted to curtail the Protector's authority. No progress was made towards a final settlement of the country, and having hardly borne with their follies for the requisite five months, Cromwell gladly seized the earliest opportunity to dissolve his second Parliament.

After the second failure he ruled for a time without the assistance of any sort of representative body. The whole country was divided into districts, over each of which was placed a major-general, and England was practically governed like a conquered

land. But this system was distasteful to Cromwell, and extremely unpopular everywhere. Tracts, like "Killing no Murder," were published, and attempts were made both to excite an open rebellion and to remove the Protector by assassination. Even the iron nature of the great general was not proof against the constant strain of watching for secret enemies. His health was declining already, when he at last assembled his third Parliament (1656). The new assembly proved much more favourable to Cromwell than the previous Houses had been. It presented the "Humble Petition and Advice," urging him to take the crown, and it succeeded so far as to persuade him to assume a practically regal authority (1657). But the Protector soon quarrelled even with this obedient body. He wished to revive, in some sort, the House of Lords, the Commons were determined to keep all power to themselves, and, after much disputation as to the relative status of the two Houses, Parliament was angrily dissolved. This would not have been the end of Cromwell's constitutional experiments had he not died shortly after the dissolution (1658).

In the midst of all his efforts to find a satisfactory form of government, the Protector had ruled with moderation and ability. At home he kept a firm hand over all, the laws were rigorously enforced, and stern justice meted out, tempered, however, with too little mercy. In the matter of the Church, he acted in accordance with the views of the Independents; a body of "Triers" was appointed, and any one who was orthodox in the Protestant sense, and whose

moral character was good, was admitted to a benefice without respect to his opinions upon episcopacy or other similar matters. He met, however, with great opposition, the natural result of his policy in an age when partisan feelings were very strong. On the one hand, the royalists could not forgive him for his share in the defeat and in the death of Charles. On the other hand, the extremists of the Army were his deadly foes. They were generally republicans, and protested that the absolute rule of a gentleman from Huntingdonshire was no better than that of a king from Scotland. They were also violently religious. In their enthusiasm they could not understand Cromwell's toleration. They clamoured for a "Gospel" government, and they were angered by the spectacle of the Protector sanctioning such worldly frivolities as a dance at Whitehall. With the majority of the soldiers, indeed, Cromwell was very popular, so that resistance to him was hopeless, but he was the object of countless plots, of which the most important were the royalist conspiracy of Vowel and the attempts of the Levellers, Sexby and Sindercomb. And, generally speaking, although feared and respected, he was also hated. Englishmen recognised the value of the good order which was preserved, but mentally rebelled against a state of society in which the slightest transgression was sure to meet with punishment. He had, also, to face another grave difficulty. The permanency of his government was not secured, and his authority had no legal basis. There was, therefore, a natural disinclination to supply money to him, while his right

to levy taxes was questionable, and while his debts might soon be repudiated by a restored Monarchy.

During the progress of the Irish war Cromwell had planned a great measure of confiscation, with the ultimate object of restricting the Catholics to the further side of the Shannon. The lands which were taken from the royalists and rebels were granted to English Puritans, and in this way a body of people who might be relied on to support the existing government was secured. Had the scheme been fully maintained, the greater part of the island would have been made Protestant; as it was, it secured the ascendancy of that party for some years. But its utility was impaired by the measures of James II., and its greatest permanent result was to increase the already existing bitterness, since the hardships of the confiscation were remembered, and added to the causes of discord. During the Protectorate, however, the mild rule of Henry Cromwell, Oliver's second son, maintained order, and did something to conciliate all parties.

In Scotland Monk was in command of an army, but Cromwell had anticipated the Act of Union, and the administration was amalgamated with that of England. The result was very satisfactory. There was a great improvement in trade and in industry, and the northern part of Great Britain enjoyed a measure of internal peace, such as it had not known before and did not again experience until after the battle of Culloden. In all three countries there was a temporary suspension of religious persecution, except in so far as the prohibition of the use of the Prayer

Book disturbed the Episcopalians of England. The great revival in material prosperity affords a conclusive proof of the generally beneficial character of the Cromwellian rule.

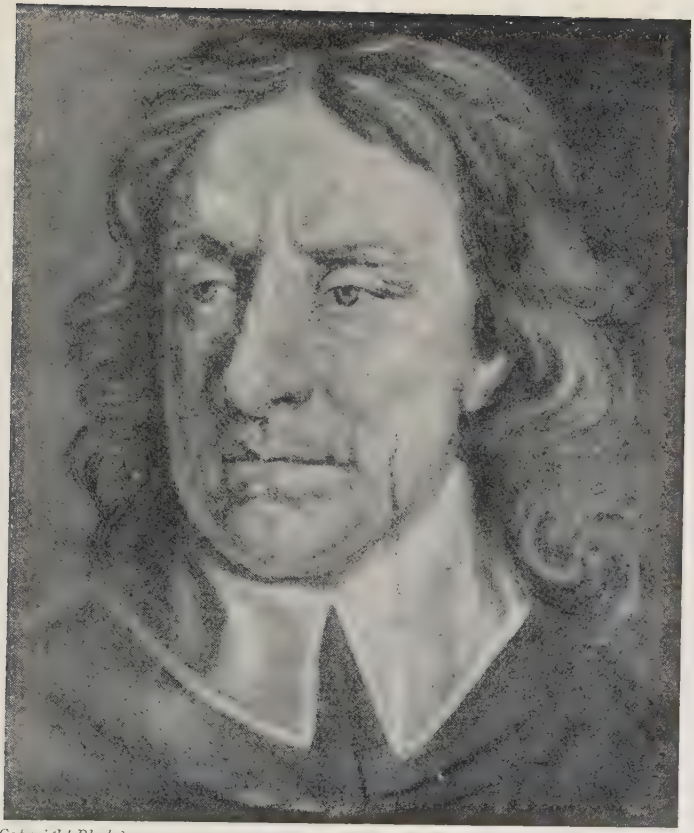
In the matter of foreign relations, the policy of the Protectorate, although it led to a revival of English prestige, is open to very serious criticism. After the death of Charles I. the States of the Continent were little inclined to recognise the new Republic. Two of the envoys of the Parliament were murdered, with the tacit approval of the courts to which they had been accredited, and Charles II. was escorted to Scotland by a Dutch squadron. To Cromwell it seemed most necessary to assert the might of his country, and his ideas were thoroughly in accord with those of the originators of the Navigation Act. This measure, which provided that all goods should come to English ports in vessels belonging either to England or to the country producing the cargoes, was directed to destroy that carrying trade, which was the main source of wealth to the United Provinces (1651). The Dutch refused to obey such a regulation, and a naval war followed, in which Blake, De Ruyter, and Von Tromp gained much distinction. For a time the success was almost equally divided, but eventually a decisive battle was won by the English off the North Foreland (1654). A peace was concluded by which the Provinces accepted the Navigation Act, and entered into alliance with their late enemies, a league joined by Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland. Having thus made his power felt, Cromwell turned his attention to the realisation of

his great ideal, that of making England the champion of Protestantism. With this end in view he joined France against Spain, and conducted a vigorous war all over the world. His soldiers co-operated with Turenne in Flanders, and acquired Mardyke and Dunkirk, fortresses of some value in securing the command of the Channel (1658). At the same time Blake sailed into the Mediterranean, chastised the pirates of Tunis and Algiers, extorted an apology from the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and alarmed the Pope in the Vatican. He did not, perhaps, actually accomplish very much, but he was the first English admiral to exhibit the naval power of his country on the coasts of Southern Europe, previous expeditions in the same direction having been little more than piratical raids by private individuals. Another expedition was sent to the West Indies with the intention of attacking Hispaniola, but it was badly organised. Its two commanders, Venables and Penn, were personal enemies, and it failed to accomplish its original purpose. In the hope, however, of removing some of the consequent disgrace, it landed in Jamaica, which island was easily conquered, and, although the value of the acquisition was not realised at the time, the possession was retained and its progress encouraged by the Protector (1655).

The vigour which had been infused into the government, and which appeared at home and abroad, raised England to a position of greater importance than she had enjoyed since the death of Elizabeth. The alliance of Cromwell was valuable, as is shown by the intervention of Mazarin to end

the persecution of the Waldenses, which resulted from his desire to secure the friendship of the Protector. But, although he thus increased the reputation of his country, and although waggons of silver passing from Portsmouth to London bore eloquent testimony to the success of Blake, there was a fundamental error in the foreign policy of Cromwell. In his zeal for the Protestant cause he regarded Spain as the great Catholic state, and adopted, in fact, the same attitude as Burleigh. But the empire of Philip II. had passed away, and, while its actual territorial extent was not greatly decreased, its energy had disappeared. On the other hand, France, thanks to the ability of Henry IV. and of Richelieu, was rapidly rising to that pre-eminent position which she held until the death of Louis XIV., and in allying with Mazarin Cromwell only assisted the rise of that power, against which his successors had to wage many a long war. It must be acknowledged, however, that he was as advanced as his contemporaries, who still believed in the strength of Spain, and that his fault was, after all, mainly lack of prescience, since there were no conclusive signs to show the change in the balance of power.

The policy of Cromwell at once illustrates and, to a great extent, reveals his character. He was most intensely religious, trust in the guidance of a Higher Power appears in every line of his letters, and their nature precludes the idea that he was a hypocrite. But his religion was rational. He was not, like the "Fifth Monarchy Men," insanely violent; on the contrary, the keynote of his Church policy was



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OLIVER CROMWELL (1599–1658).

From the portrait by Samuel Cooper at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

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toleration of all creeds save one; and that one was Catholicism, for which he had a great hatred, fearing its vast influence, and regarding it, as did most Protestants, as a creation of the devil. Otherwise he was content to live and let live. He was so far above the prejudice of the times as to welcome the Jews back to England, and his alleged iconoclasm has but little foundation in fact, the destruction of stained-glass windows and of statues having been accomplished by his namesake of the reign of Henry VIII., and having been attributed to him owing to his greater fame. And he was not really a very ambitious man. He had, it is true, that degree of ambition which is essential to great success, but it was national rather than personal. He desired to see his country great and respected, and he wished to go down to posterity as the founder of the new liberty in England. It was his misfortune to be obliged to rule as a military despot. His Parliaments would not work with him, and threatened by two extreme parties, he was compelled to rely upon the Army, the only body of men which he could trust. It may be doubted whether he ever really desired the execution of the king; it is certain that the duplicity of Charles was the primary cause of his death, and the sincerity of Cromwell's longing for a limited degree of power is almost proved not only by the frequency of his constitutional experiments, but also by the fact that such a man as Milton served him. On the other hand, he would never have consented to a restoration of the Stuarts. He was determined to be the head of the state, and he was

profoundly convinced of his own administrative gifts and of the absolute integrity of his motives. It is uncertain to whom he would have committed the task of carrying on his work ; but he had probably no intention of founding a dynasty. His natural good sense showed him the obvious absurdities of hereditary rule when the ruler is not a king. For the rest, he was a general of first-rate ability. He was stern, but not cruel ; hot-tempered, but not revengeful ; a man of exemplary moral character, despite the scandals which were industriously circulated concerning his early years, and brave to a fault. He had no oratorical gifts—all his speeches are somewhat confused—but his zeal rendered them impressive in a certain way. Taking his good and bad points together, he was the greatest man of his age, and, perhaps, the greatest of all Englishmen. His very failure was magnificent, and success was beyond the power of any man to win.

The Cromwellian system died with its creator, and the delight of the Royalists at the news that their great relentless enemy was no more affords an unequivocal testimony to his ability, and shows the revival of their own hopes. Indeed, from the moment that Oliver breathed his last the Restoration of Charles II. was certain. Richard Cromwell was, it is true, raised to his father's office, but his mild and feeble character totally unfitted him for a post which had shattered the iron nerves of the great Protector. He distrusted the Army, which, in its turn, despised him, and he attempted to rule with the assistance of a Parliament. But the Commons

would not rest content with anything short of absolute power. They insulted the Protector, who did not retaliate, and they offended the generals, who at once ordered their dismissal. The Rump was brought back in triumph, but it had learnt nothing from past experience, and proved to be as intractable as ever. Assailed by it, Richard retired into that obscurity from which he had never desired to emerge, and a Republic of the old form was established (1659). Its existence was soon ended. The government attacked the Army, and Lambert, who aspired to be a second Oliver, expelled the Rump once more. For a short time England was ruled by the survivors of the former Major-Generals.

But their authority was questioned even in the camp and weakened by their mutual jealousies, while in Scotland there was another army under the complete control of one ambitious man. Monk had watched the growing disorder in the south, and now he felt that the time had come for him to intervene. Crossing the border, he advanced into England, declaring that he was the champion of liberty. Lambert, who attempted to oppose him, was abandoned by his own soldiers and taken prisoner; Monk was everywhere hailed with enthusiasm, and petitions for a "free" Parliament came in from all parts of the country. In London the Rump was hastily reinstated, and while the army of Scotland drew near to the capital, its continued obstinacy roused indignation in the city. After some hesitation Monk, who was already in negotiation with Charles II., finally declared himself

to be in favour of the Parliament desired by the people; the Long Parliament dissolved itself, and writs were issued for a general election. Meanwhile, the Declaration of Breda appeared from the exiled king promising an amnesty, religious toleration, payment of the army, and maintenance in possession of the holders of confiscated property, but qualifying everything by a proviso that a subsequent Parliament should decide all matters of dispute. This document was laid before the two Houses, and it was unanimously agreed to recall the Stuarts in accordance with the general wish of the country. About a month after the meeting of the Convention Parliament, Charles II. landed at Dover and entered his capital, amid scenes of the utmost joy (1660). Thus the ancient royal house came back to its own, and the first and last English Republic ended in the most complete failure.

That failure was almost entirely due to the enthusiasm of the originators of the attempt. There was no very deep devotion in England to monarchical institutions until the experiment of doing without a king had been tried. But the extravagances into which the ardent Republicans were led by their own zeal disgusted all moderate men, and the measures which were proposed by them—as, for example, the substitution of the Ten Commandments for the Common Law—were altogether impracticable. It was accordingly necessary for Cromwell to assume a measure of authority far greater than that of any hereditary king, and as he could trust only to his army, the Republic

degenerated into a military despotism. To this same extravagance was ultimately due the repeated failure of the Protector's efforts to rule constitutionally. The mass of the people had no sympathy with the cry for a "Gospel-Parliament" with the communism of one section, with the Judaism of another, or with the proposed fulfilment of prophecy by a third; they naturally preferred Magna Charta to the Decalogue, and Edward I. to Moses in the sphere of politics, and they desired a settlement of the country upon mundane lines rather than an attempt to anticipate the Millennium. And so, despite the glory which surrounded Cromwell and the prosperity enjoyed under his rule, Englishmen were discontented, and it was only his personal genius which prevented a Restoration at a much earlier date.

But although as a revolutionary movement the Great Rebellion failed, its work was permanent, and while the constitution was theoretically unaltered, it was practically greatly modified. Hitherto the possibility of an absolute monarchy had been always present, and it was not regarded as extraordinary that a king should occasionally dispense with the assistance of a representative assembly. But from this time the paramount influence and the regular meeting of Parliament were assured, and, while a limited degree of personal rule was allowed, certain matters were henceforth generally regarded as being altogether outside the sphere of royal activity. The execution of Charles I. afforded a salutary warning as to the results of trifling with

the established liberties of the country, the people had shown conclusively that they were prepared to do anything rather than submit to a despotism, and future kings realised that any attempt to establish an absolute monarchy would in all probability lead either to deposition or to an appearance before another High Court of Justice. And consequently the Crown never pressed its claims if the country showed signs of rebellion; even the "glorious Revolution," popular as it undoubtedly was, was the work of a few determined men, and was only joined by the people when it had been already accomplished, and James II. was deposed before he had succeeded in causing a general outbreak among his subjects, before his dull mind had realised the immense unpopularity of his acts. Moreover, the Petition of Right became as much an integral part of the constitution as Magna Charta itself, the limitations which it imposed upon the exercise of the prerogative remained in force, and it was no longer possible for any king to find any reasonable excuse for levying taxes without consent of the House of Commons. In the same way the courts, which had been abolished by the Long Parliament, could not be revived, and those formidable engines of tyranny were relegated to the obscurity of the past as much as the financial expedients of Henry II. or the ecclesiastical jurisdictions of Becket. There was no longer any question of a return to absolute monarchy; that system had passed away for ever, and not all the efforts of devoted Churchmen could persuade England

that Divine Right was a right and proper theory or that the doctrine of No-resistance could ever be generally held.

The place which the Monarchy had lost was taken by the Parliament, which gradually absorbed all real power. And that body was also profoundly influenced by the events of the period of rebellion. Up to the time of the meeting of the Long Parliament the authority of the two Houses was almost equal, but the Lords now sank into that secondary position which they occupy at the present day. For they had shared in the calamities of the king; two-thirds of them had joined Charles at Oxford, the remainder had clung to the Parliament, had been abolished on the proclamation of the Republic, and had sought to be included in the numbers of the Rump. The loss of prestige which these vicissitudes had occasioned was final, and, although nominally restored to its previous position, the Upper Chamber remained almost discredited, serving an useful purpose, indeed, in checking the extravagance of the Commons and in acting as a court of appeal, but having no longer any real initiative power or any ultimate authority in the state. On the other hand, all the events of the Great Rebellion contributed to exalt the Lower House. That assembly had conducted the civil war, had managed the affairs of the country for some years, and had come to be regarded as the true source of all authority. And the experience which it had thus acquired was bound to have a great effect upon its position under the restored Monarchy. It might, and

actually did, lose its absolute supremacy, but no one could forget that it had ruled England or that it had treated with foreign states as a sovereign body. Henceforth it was to Parliament what Parliament was to the whole government; it was the predominant partner in the assembly of estates. But at the same time it could not establish a despotism of representatives: that attempt had been made and had been unsuccessful; for the country had not resisted the tryanny of a king in order to make room for a worse tyranny by a group of oligarchs. In short, the balance of the Constitution had been almost reached; the chief power rested with the Commons, but they had to admit both king and Lords to a subordinate share. It remained to discover the exact proportion of that share, and to decide how the Lower House should exercise its influence.

There was another reason why it was henceforward impossible to establish an absolute monarchy. To the permanence of such a system a standing army is essential, since it must necessarily rest ultimately upon violence. As has been suggested, the failure of the Stuarts was in a great measure due to the fact that they had no military force with which to coerce their unwilling subjects. But had they not alienated the affections of their people in other ways, they might have been able to supply this deficiency; there was no particular objection to the existence of an army, as long as it did not involve the billeting of soldiers in private houses. After the Great Rebellion, however, the opinions

of Englishmen upon this subject underwent a very great change. The iron rule of Cromwell left a lasting impression, and in future the existence of a standing army was regarded as being incompatible with liberty. Hardly any of James II.'s acts excited greater hostility than his formation of a camp at Hounslow, and one of the clauses of the Bill of Rights expressly declared it to be illegal to maintain a military force without consent of Parliament. Even at the present day the Acts under which the army exists require to be renewed every year. And this strong antipathy to any permanent body of soldiers effectually prevented future kings from obtaining a position which might have enabled them to assault the Constitution with any prospect of success, although in any case the eventual failure of such an attempt was certain.

The storm of the Great Rebellion did not leave the Church unscathed. It has been seen that the bishops had been forward in their adoption of the theory of Divine Right, and when the Parliament triumphed they paid the penalty for their unwise partisanship. They were expelled from the House of Lords and deprived of their sees, and the lower clergy shared in the misfortunes of their spiritual fathers. Presbyterianism was established, the use of the Liturgy was forbidden, and, although Cromwell attempted to extend toleration to the Episcopalians, the majority of benefices passed into the hands of men who either disliked or were indifferent to government by bishops. At the Restoration the Church theoretically regained all her old authority,

Photo] *[Emery Walker.*

ROBERT BLAKE (1599-1657).

From an old Print.

but actually this was not at all the case. She identified herself with the royalist party; Charles I. was exalted to the position of a martyr, and was declared to have died for the sake of a creed which he had been prepared to sacrifice in Ireland, if not in England. The doctrine of Passive Obedience was preached from every Anglican pulpit, the errors of Cromwell were zealously exposed, and it was held impossible for any man to be at once a "Roundhead" and a Churchman. But in her anxiety to prevent another rebellion the Church forgot to protest against the vices of the age; smiling bishops paid court to a Nell Gwynne or a Castlemaine, and the loyal clergy would not rebuke the immoralities of their "religious and gracious" master, the Defender of the Faith. As a result the Church ceased to be that of the nation; her cause was considered to be the same as that of the extreme Royalists and her spirituality was questioned. Nonconformity was perpetuated, and although the Anglicans had a large majority, the minority was powerful, and consisted of men so much in earnest that even the rigour of the Clarendon Code failed to bring them back to the true flock. From this time the Established Church had to face a formidable opposition; her political creed was vigorously attacked, and the spiritual unity of England was a thing of the past.

The ease with which the Restoration was ultimately accomplished was due to that hatred for a military despotism which has been already mentioned, to an intense longing for peace, and to a mental revolt against the strict morality of the Puritans. Hobbes

voiced the feelings of the majority of his countrymen when he lamented the unrest of his times and protested against the anarchy of government and the anarchy of opinion. Men were tired of the constant changes in the constitution; they longed for a definite settlement, and they saw no hope of this except in the return of the king. And in the same way they were satiated with religious controversy; they were very weary of the endless debates between the countless rival sects, and, grown distrustful of all enthusiasm and indifferent upon all creeds, they longed for the old peace, when the country was content to leave spiritual matters to the clergy and when every man was not a preacher. Under the "godly" rule of the Rump, and the sternly moral government of Cromwell too, all the frailties of human nature were heavily punished. Vice was repressed by militant Virtue. But the "saints" were few and the "Canaanites" were many in the land; the "ungodly" had a great majority, and they wished with one mind to be released from the oppression of the righteous minority. To them the Restoration seemed to be an escape from an awful nightmare; it meant freedom to drink, freedom to eat whensoever they pleased; it meant a revival of gaiety, a return of the good times; and, in short, it was regarded by most men with the same feelings of pleasure as are experienced by a schoolboy at the end of term. They preferred the noise and bustle of "Vanity Fair" to the sober joys of the "Delectable Mountains"; the excitement of the "City of Destruction" to the calm of the "Palace Beautiful."

And the resultant reaction was as violent as it well could be. Some indication of the general state of society in each period is afforded by a comparison of two contemporary authors, Milton and Wycherley. No one could surpass the great Puritan poet in moral grandeur; a deep and true Christianity pervades every line which he wrote, and nowhere in his works is there any sign of a coarse or immoral sentiment, while the excellence of his poetical genius places him in the first rank of authors, ancient and modern. Great is the contrast supplied by the popular Restoration dramatist. He can never be accused of believing in virtue or of attacking vice; he cannot be accused of delicacy of expression or of artistic merit; not a play that he wrote is anything but coarse and low-minded; not a scene could be produced on any modern English stage unless it were first altered beyond all recognition. And as the men were, so were the periods which they represent. Despite the existence of much cant and much hypocrisy, the England of Cromwell was a moral land; it was full of men who acted up to what they preached, and it was a land where religion was respected and vice reprobated. But in the Restoration period all this was changed. An age of low ideals followed, in which all enthusiasm was regarded as unreal, when morality was considered to be ridiculous, when faith was derided and piety mocked. Shamefaced virtue assumed the guise of vice; men did not dare to utter any noble sentiments. Patriotism died with religion; king, Church, and people revelled in all the licence of a Bacchanalian feast. In short, the moral degradation of England under

Charles II. is almost inconceivable, while the cynical frankness with which men paraded their immorality before the public has no parallel in the annals of this or of any other country. Liberty had, indeed, been established, but it almost seemed as if it were at the expense of all those restraints which are generally operative in civilised countries, as if the securing of political and religious freedom entailed the abrogation of all moral laws.

The Restoration may be regarded as the starting-point of modern English history. The great struggle between Crown and people ended at the return of Charles II.; henceforth the problem is not whether Parliament is to share in the government, but whether any executive power at all is to be retained by the king. And the steps which led to this condition may be once more indicated. Under Edward III. and Richard II. the reign of feudalism came to an end; in the Wars of the Roses the Baronage perished, and its revival was prevented by the "New Monarchy." By the Reformation the dangerous power of the Church was curtailed and another obstacle to liberty thus removed. Meanwhile the Tudors, by their foreign policy and their care for local government, had fostered the rise of a new opposition, and, finally, the last fight for absolutism was made by the Stuarts. Their failure secured the Limited Monarchy. At the close of the period the position of Parliament is assured, and the history of the next century and a half is the record of the steps by which the popular control of the government was organised and the manner in which it should be exercised decided.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

I.—The Fall of the Feudal Monarchy (1350–1399).

A.D.

1327–1377. Edward III. *m.* Philippa, daughter of the Count of Hainault. Twelve children: (1) Edward, the "Black Prince"; (2) Lionel, Duke of Clarence, ancestor of the Earl of March; (3) John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, father of Henry IV.; (4) Edmund, Duke of York, ancestor of Edward IV.; (5) Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, &c.

1377–1399. Richard II. *m.* (1) Anne, daughter of the Emperor Charles IV.; (2) Isabella, daughter of Charles VI. of France.

Contemporary Rulers.

Emperors. 1314. Lewis IV. (Bavaria). 1347. Charles IV. (Luxemburg).
1378. Wenzel (Luxemburg).

France. 1322. Charles IV. (Capet). 1328. Philip VI. (Valois).
1350. John II. 1364. Charles V. 1380. Charles VI.

Scotland. 1306. Robert I. (Bruce). 1329. David II. 1370. Robert II. (Stuart). 1390. Robert III.

1331–1336. Edward III. encourages the immigration of Flemish weavers.
1333. War with Scotland; battle of Halidon Hill.
1337. Beginning of the Hundred Years' War.

A.D.

1340. Battle of Sluys. Disputed succession in Brittany. First audit of accounts by the Commons.
1346. Battles of Creçy and Neville's Cross. Siege of Calais, which capitulated in 1347.
1349–1350. The Black Death. First Statute of Labourers.
1351. Statute of Provisors.
1353. Appropriation of supplies. Royal ordinances to be entered on the Rolls of Parliament.
1355. Black Prince ravages Southern France. The "Burnt Candlemas."
1356. Battle of Poitiers. Rebellion of the "Jacquerie."
1360. Treaty of Bretigni. Wycliff at Oxford.
1362. Langland's "Vision of Piers Plowman," first appears; completed in 1380.
1363. Edward abandons tax on wool.
1367. Battle of Navarette; heavy taxation leads to revolt of Aquitaine.
1368. Wycliff's *De Dominio civili.*
1370. Sack of Limoges.
1372. Battle off Rochelle.
1374. Loss of Aquitaine completed.
1376. The "Good Parliament." Impeachment of the adherents of John of Gaunt.
1377. Trial of Wycliff. End of the "Babylonish Captivity" of the Popes; next year, the "Great Schism" begins.
1377–1385. Ascendancy of Lancaster.
1380. Poll Tax.
1381. The Peasants' Revolt.
1384. Death of Wycliff. His Bible was probably completed in 1383.
1385–1390. Ascendancy of Gloucester; during the absence of John of Gaunt in Spain.
1386. Impeachment of Michael de la Pole. Commission of regency.
1387. The Lords Appellant.
1390–1399. Richard's personal government.
1392. Statute of *Præmunire.*
1397. Condemnation of Haxey. Death of Gloucester.

A.D.

1398. Banishment of Hereford and Norfolk. Hereford returns next year and deposes Richard.

II.—The Constitutional Experiment (1399–1461).

1399–1413. Henry IV. *m.* (1) Mary, daughter of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and (2) Joan, daughter of the King of Navarre and Duchess Dowager of Brittany. By his first wife: (1) Henry V.; (2) Thomas, Duke of Clarence; (3) John, of Bedford; (4) Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester; (5) Blanche, *m.* Lewis, son of the Emperor Rupert; (6) Philippa, *m.* Eric, King of Denmark.

1413–1422. Henry V. *m.* Catherine, daughter of Charles VI. of France. One son, Henry VI. Catherine *m.* (2) Owen Tudor, grandfather of Henry VII.

1422–1461. Henry VI. *m.* Margaret, daughter of Réné, Titular King of Jerusalem, &c., Duke of Anjou, &c. One son, Edward, Prince of Wales.

Contemporary Rulers.

Emperors. 1378. Wenzel (Luxemburg). 1400. Rupert (Palatinate).
1410. Sigismund (Luxemburg). 1438. Albert II. (Austria).
1440. Frederic III. (Austria).

France. 1380. Charles VI. 1422. Charles VII.

Scotland. 1390. Robert III. 1405. James I. 1436. James II. 1460. James III.

1399. Condemnation of Haxey reversed. The Commons thus establish their privilege of freedom of speech.

1400. Rebellion of the Earls crushed.

1401. Owen Glendower rebels in Wales. Statute *De Heretico Comburrendo.*

1402. Battle of Homildon Hill.

1403. Rebellion of the Percies; battle of Shrewsbury.

1404. The "Unlearned Parliament."

A.D.

1405. Archbishop Scrope executed.
1406. Petition of Thirty-One Articles.
1407. Murder of the Duke of Orleans; civil war in France.
1414. Council of Constance ends the "Great Schism."
1415. Conspiracy of Cambridge. Capture of Harfleur. Battle of Agincourt.
1419. Henry V. takes Rouen. Assassination of the Duke of Burgundy.
1420. Treaty of Troyes.
1422–1435. Bedford's government.
1424. Battle of Verneuil. Gloucester's expedition to Flanders.
1428. Siege of Orleans. Battle of the Herrings.
1429. Joan of Arc raises the siege.
1430. Forty-shilling franchise established.
1435. Congress of Arras. Death of Bedford.
1445. Treaty of Tours; marriage of Henry VI. to Margaret of Anjou.
1447. Death of Gloucester. Rivalry of York with Somerset, and William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.
1450. Battle of Formigny; followed by loss of Northern France.
1450. Impeachment and death of Suffolk. Cade's Rebellion.
1453. Battle of Castillon; loss of Southern France, Capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II.
1454–1455. First regency of York.
1455. Battle of St. Albans.
1456–1457. Second regency of York.
1459. Battle of Bloreheath.
1460. Battle of Northampton. York claims the throne. Battle of Wakefield.
1461. Battle of Mortimer's Cross, St Albans, and Towton. Deposition of Henry VI.

III.—The House of York (1461–1485).

1461–1483. Edward IV. *m.* Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Woodville, Lord Rivers; and widow of Sir

A.D.

John Grey. Children: (1) Edward V.; (2) Richard, Duke of York; (3) Elizabeth, *m.* Henry VII., &c.

1483. Edward V.

1483–1485. Richard III., *m.* Anne, daughter of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, and widow of Edward, son of Henry VI. One son, Edward, Prince of Wales.

CONTEMPORARY RULERS.

EMPERORS. 1440. Frederic III.

FRANCE. 1442. Charles VII. 1461. Louis XI. 1483. Charles VII.

SCOTLAND. 1460. James III.

SPAIN. 1479. Ferdinand (of Aragon) marries Isabella (of Castille); they rule Spain jointly.

1464. Battles of Hedgeley Moor and Hexham. Judge Fortescue writes his *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*.

1465. Marriage of Edward IV.

1466. Alliance with Burgundy.

1470. Flight and return of Warwick; temporary restoration of Henry VI.

1471. Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury.

1475. Treaty of Pecquigny.

1476. Introduction of Printing.

1477. Marriage of Mary of Burgundy to Maximilian.

1483. Benevolences declared to be illegal. Buckingham's rebellion.

1485. Battle of Bosworth.

IV.—THE TUDOR MONARCHY (1485–1529).

1485–1509. Henry VII. *m.* Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV. Children: (1) Arthur, Prince of Wales; (2) Henry VIII.; (3) Margaret, *m.* (i.) James IV. of Scotland, and (ii.) Earl of Angus; (4) Mary, *m.* (i.) Louis XII. of France, and (ii.) Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk.

A.D.

1509–1547. Henry VIII. *m.* (i.) Katherine, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, one daughter, Mary; (ii.) Anne, daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, one daughter, Elizabeth; (iii.) Jane, daughter of Sir John Seymour, one son, Edward VI.; (iv.) Anne, sister of William, Duke of Cleves; (v.) Catherine, daughter of Lord Edmund Howard; (vi.) Catherine, daughter of Sir Thomas Parr and widow of Lord Latimer.

CONTEMPORARY RULERS.

EMPERORS. 1440. Frederic III. 1493. Maximilian I. 1519. Charles V. (King of Spain).

FRANCE. 1483. Charles VIII. 1498. Louis XII. 1515. Francis I.

SCOTLAND. 1460. James III. 1488. James IV. 1513. James V.

SPAIN. 1479. Ferdinand and Isabella. 1504 Ferdinand (Aragon). Philip I. and Joanna (Castile). 1516. Charles I. (Emperor Charles V.).

1487. Court founded for the trial of great nobles; the subsequent Star Chamber.

1487. Lambert Simmel's rebellion: Battle of Stoke.

1488. Death of Francis of Brittany. Rising in Northern England caused by heavy taxation.

1491. Perkin Warbeck appears. Anne of Brittany marries Charles VIII.

1492. Columbus discovers America. The *Intercursus Magnus.*

1493. Philip of Burgundy marries Joanna of Spain. Treaty of Étaples.

1494. Charles VIII. invades Italy. The "Holy League" formed against the French.

1495. Poynings' laws. Statute declaring it lawful to serve the "de facto king."

1496. Perkin Warbeck in Scotland.

1497. Cornish rising. Battle of Blaçkheath. Capture

A.D.

of Warbeck. Sebastian Cabot lands in America. Vasco da Gama rounds the Cape of Good Hope.

1499. Warbeck executed. Colet lectures on Greek at Oxford.

1501. Katherine of Aragon *m.* Arthur, who dies next year.

1502. Margaret Tudor *m.* James IV. of Scotland.

1503. Death of Elizabeth of York.

1504. *Intercursus malus.*

1508. League of Cambray.

1511. Holy League against Louis XII.

1513. Battles of Guinegate and Flodden. Wolsey chief Minister.

1514. Incorporation of Trinity House, Deptford.

1515. Sir Thomas More's "Utopia."

1517. Martin Luther at Wittenberg

1520. Alliance of England with Charles V. War with Francis I.

1521. Henry writes his tract against Luther.

1523. The Commons refuse Wolsey's demand for a subsidy.

1525. The Battle of Pavia.

1527. Sack of Rome by Charles V.

1528. Trial of Katherine before Wolsey and Campeggio. Fall of Wolsey.

V.—The Reformation (1529–1558).

1559–1547. Henry VIII. (see above).

1547–1553. Edward VI.

1553–1558. Mary I. *m.* Philip II., King of Spain.

Contemporary Rulers.

Emperors.	1519.	Charles V.	1558.	Ferdinand I.
France.	1515.	Francis I.	1547.	Henry II.
Scotland.	1513.	James V.	1542.	Mary.
Spain.	1516.	Charles I.	1556.	Philip II.

A.D.

1529–1536. The Reformation Parliament.
1530. The nation pardoned by Act of Parliament for having admitted Wolsey's legatine authority.
1531. First-fruits, &c., taken from the Pope.
1532. Regulation of appeals to Rome.
1533. Cranmer declares the marriage with Katherine invalid. Act of Submission of the clergy.
1534. First Succession Act. Act of Supremacy. The Nun of Kent executed.
1535. Dissolution of the smaller monasteries. Statute of Uses. Execution of More and Fisher.
1536. Irish Rebellion. Execution of Anne Boleyn. Pilgrimage of Grace. The "Ten Articles."
1538. The Bible issued in English by royal authority.
1539. The Six Articles.
1540. Dissolution of the larger monasteries. Execution of Thomas Cromwell. Act giving Royal Proclamations the force of law.
1542. Battle of Solway Moss. Henry takes the title of "King" of Ireland.
1543. Wales fully incorporated with England.
1544. Capture of Boulogne.
1546. Peace with France. Beginning of the Smalkaldic War (1546–1552).
1547–1549. Protectorate of Somerset.
1547. Battle of Pinkie.
1548. Act of Uniformity. First Prayer Book of Edward VI.
1549. Risings in the West and East. Fall of Somerset. Government of Warwick (Northumberland).
1550 Sale of Boulogne.
1552. Execution of Somerset. Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. The Forty-two Articles.
1553. Proclamation of Lady Jane Grey as Queen. Defeat and execution of Northumberland.
1554. Sir Thomas Wyatt's rebellion. Execution of Lady Jane Grey. Mary marries Philip. Reunion with Rome.

A.D.

1555–1558. The Marian Persecution.
1557. Battle of St. Quentin. Loss of Calais.

VI.—The Elizabethan Settlement (1558–1588).

1558–1603. Elizabeth.

Contemporary Rulers.

Emperors.	1558. Ferdinand I.	1564. Maximilian II.
	1576. Rudolf II.	
France.	1547. Henry VI.	1559. Francis II.
	1560. Charles IX.	1574. Henry III.
Scotland.	1542. Mary.	1567. James VI.
Spain.	1556. Philip II.	

1559. Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity.
1560. The Lords of the Congregation triumph in Scotland. Beginning of the "Wars of Religion" in France.
1562. First persecuting statute of Elizabeth.
1563. Act of Apprentices. The Thirty-nine Articles published.
1563–1582. Immigration of Protestant refugees from France and the Low Countries.
1566. Foundation of the Royal Exchange.
1567. Murder of Darnley. Battle of Carberry Hill.
1568. Battle of Langside. Mary takes refuge in England. The rebellion of the United Provinces begins.
1569. Plot of Norfolk in favour of Mary.
1570. Publication of the Bull of Deposition.
1571. The Thirty-nine Articles made binding on the clergy. The Ridolfi Plot. Battle of Lepanto.
1572. Massacre of St. Bartholomew.
1576. Attempted colonisation of Labrador.
1577. Drake's voyage to the Pacific.
1580. Revolt in Ireland organised by the Jesuits. Esmé Stuart in Scotland.
1581. Foundation of the Turkey Company.

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1583. Court of High Commission established. The *ex officio* oath. Throgmorton's Plot.
1584. Murder of William the Silent. "Bond of Association." Attempted colonisation of Virginia.
1585. Acts against the Jesuits.
1586. Battle of Zutphen. Babington's conspiracy.
1587. Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots.

VII.—The Struggle with Spain (1588–1603).

1558–1603. Elizabeth.

Contemporary Rulers.

Emperors.	1576. Rudolf II.	
France.	1574. Henry III.	1589. Henry IV. (Bourbon).
Scotland.	1567. James VI.	
Spain.	1556. Philip II.	1598. Philip III.

1587. Drake burns the Spanish Fleet at Cadiz.
1588. The Armada. "Martin Marprelate Tracts." Mr. Cope's "Bill and Book."
1590. Spenser's "Faerie Queene."
1593. Persecution of the Puritans.
1593–1608. Shakespeare's Plays.
1594. Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity."
1596. Attack on Cadiz.
1598. Death of Burleigh. Rebellion in Ireland.
1600. East India Company founded.
1601. Monopolies successfully resisted. The Poor Law. Execution of Essex.

VIII.—The Theory of Divine Right (1603–1640).

1603–1625. James I. *m.* Anne, daughter of Frederic II., King of Denmark. Children: (1) Henry, Prince of Wales; (2) Charles I.; (3) Elizabeth, *m.* Frederic, Elector Palatine of the Rhine.
1625–1649. Charles I. *m.* Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV., King of France. Children: (1)

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Charles II.; (2) James II.; (3) Mary, *m.* William, Statholder of the Netherlands, and four other children.

CONTEMPORARY RULERS.

EMPERORS.	1576. Rudolf II. 1612. Matthias. 1619. Ferdinand II. 1637. Ferdinand III.
FRANCE.	1589. Henry IV. 1610. Louis XIII.
SPAIN.	1598. Philip III. 1621. Philip IV.

1603. The Millenary Petition. Main and Bye Plots.
1604. Hampton Court Conference.
1605. Gunpowder Plot.
1606. Bates' Case.
1607. Virginia finally settled.
1609. The "Great Contract."
1610. Plantation of Ulster.
1612. Death of Robert Cecil.
1613. Elizabeth *m.* the Elector Palatine.
1614. James' second Parliament dissolved.
1616. Fall of Somerset; rise of Buckingham. The case of "Commendams."
1618. Beginning of the Thirty Years' War. Execution of Raleigh.
1620. The Pilgrim Fathers land in New England.
1621. Revival of Impeachment. Bacon fined. The "Novum Organon." "Protestation" of the Commons.
1623. Colonisation of New Hampshire.
1624. War with Spain after the breaking off of the proposed marriage alliance.
1625. Futile attempt on Cadiz.
1626. Impeachment of Buckingham.
1627. War with France. Darnel's Case.
1628. Petition of Right. Murder of Birmingham.
1629. The Three Resolutions. Dissolution of the third Parliament.

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1629–1640. Personal government of Charles.
1633. Laud made Archbishop. Wentworth in Ireland. Colonisation of Connecticut and Maryland.
1634. Ship Money first raised.
1636. Colonisation of Rhode Island. Plantation of Connaught.
1637. Prosecution of Prynne. Trial of Hampden.
1638. The Scotch resist the introduction of the Prayer Book. They take the Covenant.
1639. Charles forced to give way to the Scotch.
1640. "Short" Parliament. Renewed war with the Scotch. Meeting of the Long Parliament.

IX.—The Great Rebellion (1640–1649).

1625–1649. Charles I. (see above).

Contemporary Rulers.

Emperors.	1637. Ferdinand III.
France.	1610. Louis XIII. 1643. Louis XIV.
Spain.	1621. Philip IV.

1641. Execution of Strafford. Abolition of the Courts of Star Chamber, &c. Triennial Act. Act declaring that Parliament should be dissolved only with its own consent. "The Incident." Irish Rebellion. Grand Remonstrance.
1642. Impeachment of and attempt to arrest the Five Members. Militia Bill. Battle of Edgehill.
1643. Siege of Gloucester. Parliament takes the Covenant. First Battle of Newbury.
1644. Marston Moor. Second Battle of Newbury. Parliamentary Army capitulates at Lostwithiel.
1645. New Model Army formed. Self-denying Ordinance. Battles of Naseby and Philiphaugh.
1646. Charles surrenders to the Scots.
1647. The Army gets possession of Charles.
1648. The "Second" Civil War. "Pride's Purge."
1649. Trial and Execution of Charles.

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X.—The Rule of Oliver Cromwell.

1649–1653. The Commonwealth.
1653–1658. Oliver Cromwell, Protector.
1658–1659. Richard Cromwell, Protector.
1659–1660. The Commonwealth (restored).

Contemporary Rulers.

Emperors.	1637. Ferdinand III.	1658. Leopold I.
France.	1643. Louis XIV.	
Spain.	1621. Philip IV.	

1649. Cromwell takes Drogheda.
1650. Battle of Dunbar.
1651. Battle of Worcester. Navigation Laws. Hobbes' "Leviathan."
1652. Dutch War.
1653. Expulsion of the Rump. The Nominee Parliament. Instrument of Government.
1654. Peace with Holland. Cromwell's second Parliament.
1655. The Major-Generals. Conquest of Jamaica.
1656. Cromwell's third Parliament.
1657. The "Humble Petition and Advice."
1658. Capture of Dunkirk. Death of Oliver Cromwell.
1659. Resignation of Richard Cromwell. Restoration of the Rump.
1660. Monk marches on London. Meeting of the Convention Parliament. Return of Charles II.

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